

WILD WEST



A MAGAZINE CONTAINING STORIES. SKETCHES Etc. OF WESTERN LIFE.

FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 168 WEST 23D STREET, NEW YORK

No. 654.

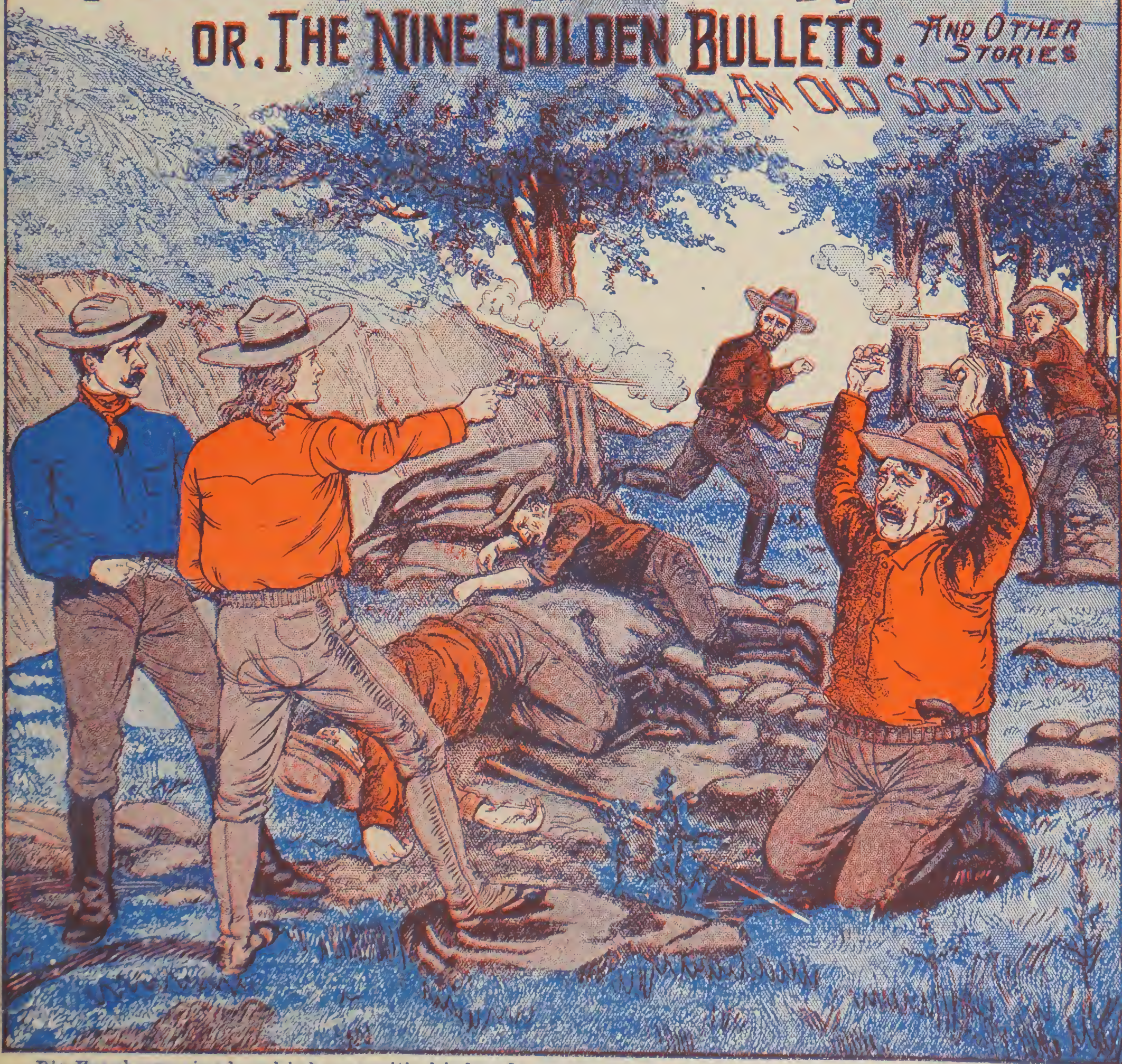
NEW YORK, APRIL 30, 1915.

Price 5 Cents.

YOUNG WILD WEST'S NERVE!

OR THE NINE GOLDEN BULLETS. *AND OTHER STORIES*

By AN OLD SCOUT



Elg Frank remained on his knees with his hands above his head, but the other two sprang to their feet and darted away. One of them fired a shot as he did so, but it was badly aimed and did no damage.

WILD WEST WEEKLY

A Magazine Containing Stories, Sketches, Etc., of Western Life

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1915, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 168 West 22d Street, New York.

Entered at the New York, N. Y., Post Office as Second-Class Matter.

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— OR —

THE NINE GOLDEN BULLETS

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CHAPTER I.

CHEYENNE CHARLIE'S CLOSE CALL.

"String him up, boys!"

"Death to ther horse thief!"

"Git that rope over ther limb—quick!"

"Don't give him a chance to breathe another minute!"

"We'll show ther miserable coyote how we treat horse thieves in Nugget Flats!"

"Gentlemen, you are making a big mistake. I am no horse thief! I shot the real thief and was leadin' ther horse here to find an owner for him, when you fellers jumped upon me. You are making a big mistake! I am Cheyenne Charlie, an' I belong over in Weston."

It was a drama typical of the Wild West that was being enacted.

The scene was at the mouth of a deep gulch near a mushroom mining camp that fairly bristled with tents. It was about four in the afternoon of an October day in the seventies.

Nugget Flats was less than a week old, and yet a horse thief had already showed up and worked his game.

A fine gray horse belonging to Rugged Pete, the so-called "mayor" of the town, had been stolen the night before, and now a stranger to the few reckless inhabitants of the camp had been found with the horse in his possession.

The man who was about to be hanged to pay the penalty of the crime certainly did not look like a horse thief.

About thirty years of age, tall, well formed and as straight as an arrow, he stood there, his hands bound behind him and the noose about his neck.

There was no look of fear upon the handsome face, but there was one of deep concern, and the flash of his dark eyes was almost proof enough to show that he was innocent.

As he spoke to the men they paused a moment to listen to what he might have to say.

"You are not the sort of men to hang a fellow without giving him a chance to speak a few words in his own defense," came the words from beneath the dark, drooping mustache.

"I tell you that I am Cheyenne Charlie from Weston. I am a partner with Young Wild West, the famous young scout, in the Wild West Mining and Improvement Company. I would sooner cut off my right hand than steal a horse. The man who stole the horse opened fire on me as I was comin' around a bend about half a mile back here. I dropped him, an' then caught ther horse an' come this way, thinkin' I might find ther owner of him, 'cause I seen he was a fine beast an' could tell by ther man's actions that he had stolen him. If you will go up ther hill half a mile you'll find ther carcass of ther thief. He's got a bullet in his heart an' one in his forehead. Gentlemen, I ain't no horse thief!"

There were a few among that motley crowd of rough men who believed what the man said was true.

But the majority ruled, and there were more who did not believe him than there were those who did.

"Up with him, boys! He's had enough ter say!" cried Rugged Pete, who stood holding the returned horse by the bridle rein. "Git that rope over ther limb. There! That's it! Now—one, two, three! Up he goes!"

The rope tightened about the neck of Cheyenne Charlie, and the next moment he was hauled upward.

His feet were not more than a foot from the ground when a rifle cracked from a point above the group of miners and the rope was severed in twain by an unerring bullet.

The intended victim dropped to the ground, not much the worse for his brief experience of being hanged.

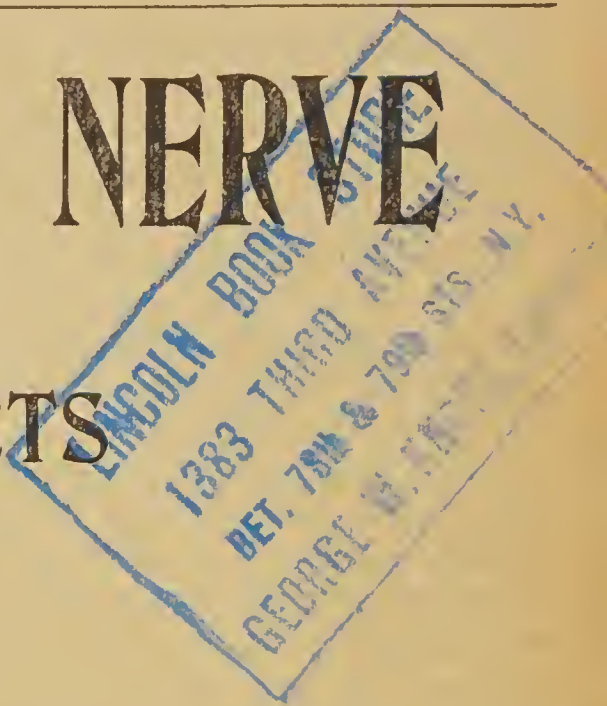
The miners stood gasping in amazement at each other for the space of a second, and then from the hillside there came the clattering of hoofs.

Before they had time to make a move a spirited sorrel horse dashed among them, and, rearing high in the air, threatened to trample some of the miners under his hoofs.

But the horse was not alone!

On his back was a handsome youth of probably nineteen, whose long chestnut locks streamed over his shoulders and whose symmetrical form really seemed to be a part of the magnificent horse.

He held the bridle rein in his teeth, and in either hand was a shining revolver ready to spit forth death-dealing bullets



among the twenty men, the majority of whom were so anxious to hang the man they called a horse thief.

"Cut that man loose!" came from the lips of the new arrival. "Cut him loose, or as sure as my name is Young Wild West, I will send some of you into eternity so quick that you will never know what struck you!"

A deep hush came over the assembled miners.

They looked at each other in silence, and not one of them offered to draw his shooter.

They felt that there was something about the young fellow who called himself Young Wild West that was more than ordinary.

Never before had they met one whose words were as weighty as his were, and never before had they felt how insignificant they were in the presence of real, genuine nerve.

"Just in time, Wild!" exclaimed Cheyenne Charlie. "They were hanging me for a horse thief."

"I am glad that I was in time," was the reply. "I struck the body of a man up on the mountainside, and thought it must have been you who laid him low. Then I followed your trail till I got to a place where I could see what was going on. It was a good distance, but I had to make the shot to save your life. Now, then, you fellows! Don't stand around as though you were petrified. Untie this man at once. He is no horse thief. Hurry, now! I don't believe in delays."

"Right yer are, pard!" said Rugged Pete, and he stepped forward and severed the rope that bound Charlie's hands behind him and then took the noose from about his neck.

"If the man ain't ther one as stole ther horse we don't want to hang him, do we, boys?" he added, casting a sweeping glance around.

"No!" chorused the men.

"A sensible lot," nodded Young Wild West. "Now, then, gentlemen, I would like to know how you came to make a mistake like this. Cheyenne Charlie is no more of a horse thief than any of you are. If he says he shot the man who stole the horse you can just bet that he did. Now, then, the question is, who did steal the horse? Is there any one missing from your camp?"

"Yes," answered one of the men. "A feller named Jaggs went away this noon, but ther horse was taken last night."

"That might be, too. Jaggs might have taken the horse and put him in some hiding-place last night. He could have done that, you know, and then this morning he could have left the camp in what seemed an honest way and picked up the horse and rode off. Did he leave on foot?"

"Yes," was the answer.

"Didn't it occur to you that he was the thief?"

"Waal, yes, we sorter allowed that he was ther skunk, but when we found this man with ther horse we reckoned that he was ther man we wanted," said Rugged Pete, in a tone of apology.

"Well, just take a ride up the hill with us, and we will see if Jaggs was the man Cheyenne Charlie shot. Come on, now! I want this thing settled to your full satisfaction."

The men had their horses with them, since they had been searching the surrounding country nearly all day for the thief, and without any demurring, they mounted.

Cheyenne Charlie took possession of his own horse, and then the cavalcade started up the mountainside, led by Young Wild West.

Strange to say, there was not a man among them who questioned the right of the nervy young scout in doing what he had just done. They had heard of him before and knew better than to express any doubt about what he said.

They rode along with him just as though necessity demanded that they should and not because they wanted to be sure that they had made a big mistake.

Already they felt certain that they had been about to hang the wrong man, and when they looked at the graceful figure on the sorrel horse they felt glad that they had not.

Some one would have gone under if they had, and each of them figured that he might have been one of the unlucky ones.

Wild soon reached the spot where Charlie had done battle with the man.

The body was lying there just as it had dropped, and, pointing to it, he said:

"Is that the carcass of the man Jaggs?"

"Yep!" exclaimed the mayor of the camp. "That's him. Young Wild West, we made a mistake, an' I'm mighty glad, for one, that you happened along in time."

"Three cheers for Young Wild West!" yelled a small man in the crowd.

He was one of the few who had believed Cheyenne Charlie when he said they were making a mistake in taking him for the thief, and bore the name of "The Dazzler."

The cheers were given with a will. The miners yelled till their voices were echoed from the surrounding hills.

Then they all shook hands with him, after which Rugged Pete turned to Cheyenne Charlie and said:

"Pard, you are the real feller to 'pologize ter. Put her thar!"

The scout did not hesitate to shake hands with them, and one at a time they urged their horses up to him and grasped the palm of the man they had been so anxious to hang as a horse thief.

"Now, then, boys, how about burying this carcass?" asked Wild.

"Drag ther remains of ther skung down here a bit and chuck him over the precipice. That will be a good enough grave for him," said the mayor.

"That's right!" exclaimed The Dazzler. "There ain't anybody alive as has seen ther bottom of that place yet. It are so deep that even ther vultures can't git to ther bottom of it."

The body of the horse thief was very quickly disposed of, and then Young Wild West and Cheyenne Charlie were invited down to the camp.

They accepted the invitation, and riding in the front rank with Rugged Pete and The Dazzler, they entered Nugget Flats for the first time.

CHAPTER II.

TIM, THE TERROR, AND HIS GANG ARRIVE.

Young Wild West had just heard of the new mining camp called Nugget Flats, and on the afternoon of the day on which our story opens he had started over to see the place, accompanied by Cheyenne Charlie.

It was only about eight miles from Weston, and lay between the towns of Spondulicks and Devil Creek.

They chose as straight a cut as they could, and when pretty well over to the new camp they reached a fork on the mountainside, each direction suggesting that it was the proper one to take.

After a short consultation they decided to each take a different course for ten minutes and then come back to the fork and report.

Wild felt that the way into the camp would be found a great deal easier by doing this.

They set out, and it was while he was riding the road that led slightly to the left that Cheyenne Charlie came in contact with the horse thief and shot him, after narrowly missing being killed himself.

The fellow admitted that he had stolen the horse when he opened fire on the scout, so Charlie, happening to catch sight

of a number of men riding along as though in search of some one, started to take the horse to them.

They were easily half a mile distant, but he thought by meeting them he could also find the way to Nugget Flats and then ride back and report to his partner.

But what happened when the men came upon him the reader knows.

Young Wild West had been close enough to hear the shots that were exchanged by his friend and the horse thief, and he hastened to the scene, only to find Charlie missing and a dead body there.

This naturally made him hasten along the trail, and he had reached the scene of the hanging just in the nick of time.

Had the men refused to liberate Charlie when he told them so, Wild would certainly have opened fire on them, and he would have come pretty near to liberating Charlie himself.

It was his great shot from the hill above that had really saved Charlie, but he lost no time in getting to his side after firing it.

And by acting as he did Young Wild West had made himself a hero in the eyes of all but a few of the men.

There were two or three in that crowd who, though they were afraid of him, hated him because he had made them do just as he liked.

But there was nothing strange about this. It is the same the world over. Fear and jealousy sometimes travel hand in hand.

Only half a dozen men had been left at the camp when the score of miners went out to hunt down the horse thief, and these had quit work and were "liquoring up" at Downie's tent, which was the place where whisky was sold.

It would scarcely be a mining camp if whisky was not sold in it.

When they saw the mounted men approaching they came out to learn the result of the hunt.

They saw that the mayor was riding the horse that had been stolen from him, so they knew something had happened.

"So you got him, eh, Pete?" called out the dispenser of the stuff called whisky.

"Yep!" replied the mayor. "It was Jaggs what took ther horse, an' Jaggs is now where ther crows can't even pick him. He was a sneak, he was, an' it is too bad that he didn't die with a rope around his neck."

"That are too bad," grunted Downie, shaking his head sadly. "Ther feller owed me nine dollars for whisky, which I was fool enough to trust him for. Now that's gone!"

"Yes, that's gone where ther woodbine twineth," spoke up The Dazzler. "Gentlemen, let me introduce you to Young Wild West an' his partner, Cheyenne Charlie, from Weston."

"You are gettin' mighty soon, Dazzle," said the mayor. "I allow that it's my place to do ther introducin'. Now, then, gents of Nugget Flats, I want to make you all acquainted with Young Wild West an' Cheyenne Charlie. They are from Weston, an' they are right up to snuff."

"Glad to meet you, boys!" exclaimed Wild, as he threw himself from the saddle in his easy-going way. "We thought we would ride over and see what kind of a place Nugget Flats was. You are doing well, I see. Found any pockets worth anything yet?"

"One or two," answered the whisky seller. "Things hain't goin' jest right yet. We expect a new delegation here to-morrow, an' then things will be warm. There's four big wagon loads of stuff, about forty men an' a woman comin' through."

"That will make things lively," Wild admitted, smiling at the earnest way in which the man spoke. "I guess we will stay over till the new arrivals come."

Cheyenne Charlie, who had finished shaking hands with the

men who had been in the tent saloon, now led the way inside and ordered drinks for the boys.

Not one declined the invitation, nor did any one say anything when Wild refused to drink whisky and took a glass of water instead.

Then Wild treated them all, after which some of the men went to the claims they had staked out and started in to work, and the rest hung around the tent to get more whisky.

Games of cards and dice were soon going in full blast, but neither of our friends took a hand in any of them.

As they meant to stay there over night, they looked around for a place to pitch a camp.

They soon found one within a hundred yards of the group of tents.

The spot was right against the steep side of a bluff and about ten feet above the ground a ledge projected out a few feet.

"This is good enough," said Wild. "If a bad storm should come up we will be pretty well protected here."

"I guess we had better cut down a few of the fir trees that are so thick around here," observed Charlie. "They'll make soft beds for us."

"That's right. You go ahead and cut the firs, and I will get a supply of wood for our campfire. The nights are getting chilly, and a fire won't be out of place."

Without any further talk the two started in to do the things proposed, and in less than half an hour they had a real comfortable-looking camp.

They had not come to Nugget Flats empty-handed, either, for they had brought a small coffe-pot, a frying-pan and some eatables.

Though both were fond of the game that could be shot on almost every hand, they did not desire to live upon it altogether.

Bread and potatoes went good with any kind of meat, whether it was venison, bear or common jerked beef.

It was a little before sundown when Wild and Charlie began cooking their supper.

Their horses were tethered close by on the bank of a running brook where there was plenty of good, wholesome grass and everything looked like genuine contentment around the little camp.

The two scouts had just begun to sip their coffee when the sound of approaching hoofs came to their ears.

Then a series of yells rang out and revolver shots began to sound.

"Some new arrivals, I guess," said Young Wild West, rising to his feet.

"I guess so," nodded his companion. "That shootin' don't sound as though there's any fightin' goin' on; some gang is ridin' into town an' shootin' an' yellin' jest to show the natives what sort of stuff they are made of."

Wild smiled and nodded.

"You have hit it exactly, Charlie," he answered. "Ah! here they come!"

About a dozen horsemen suddenly appeared around a bend, riding at full speed for the heart of the camp.

A single glance sufficed our friends to see that they were all under the influence of bad whisky.

They were yelling themselves hoarse and shooting their revolvers in the air as though cartridges were plentiful and did not cost a cent.

"Who-hoo! Whoo-he! Whoop!" yelled the man in the lead, a regular giant of a fellow clad in a suit of buckskin and mounted on a big black horse. "Let her go, boys! This is Nugget Flats, an' we've got here a day ahead of time. Make things hum, now! Our whisky ain't cost us a cent, so far, an' it ain't a-goin' to this day an' night."

"They are what some people call 'daredevils,'" said Wild. "Well, Charlie, I hope they will let us alone, because I don't feel in the humor to stand much fooling to-night."

"Oh, I reckon they won't bother us," was the reply. "Gee! There they go for Downie's tent. You'll see it come down in less than two minutes."

There was a rough canvas sign stretched from two poles in front of the saloon which bore the words:

"JIM DOWNIE'S HOTEL.

"Whisky 50 cents a Drink.—No Trust."

The reckless band of horsemen rode right into the tent, or as many of them as could get in did, and then, as Cheyenne Charlie predicted, the tent came down in less than two minutes.

Young Wild West could not resist the temptation to walk over and see how the thing would turn out, and quickly swallowing the last of his coffee, he said:

"Now is a chance to see what sort of people there are here. If Downie takes that kind of treatment good-humoredly he must be a regular angel in disguise."

The two hurried over and were just in time to see Downie come crawling from under the tent, swearing like a trooper.

He had drawn his revolver, and the first thing our friends knew he was shooting right and left at the moving tent.

The men and horses who were beneath it gave it the appearance of a storm on the ocean in a scene in a fourth rate theater.

"Come out of there, you drunken fools!" the proprietor of the wrecked place kept shouting. "You can't run my shebang, and the quicker you stop tryin' to ther better it will be for all of yer!"

The big leader of the horsemen, who had dismounted, very deftly picked up an empty barrel and let it go at the enraged man.

It struck him on the side and bowled him over like a ten-pin.

"Lay there, you crazy galoot!" he shouted. "If you don't want to take a little fun, jest git up an' start in shootin' ag'in. If you do I'll let about six streaks of twilight through your carcass in no time!"

Then he began slashing the tent so his men could get out.

Downie got up and took a seat on the barrel, but he did not do any more shooting just then.

He had made his bluff and it had failed.

In about five minutes the men were out of the wreck of the tent.

As luck would have it, Downie's bullets had only slightly wounded one man and killed a horse.

"Where's the pizen-faced galoot as shot me?" the wounded man cried, glaring around in a drunken rage. "I'll make a sieve of him in jest one minute an' a half!"

"There he is!" exclaimed the big man, pointing to Downie, who was still seated on the barrel.

Downie was no coward, even if he had taken a back seat temporarily.

He was on his feet in an instant, and when the wounded man began to fire at him he returned the compliment.

He proved to be the best shot, for at the fourth report the new arrival dropped with a bullet through his left breast.

"That settles him," said Downie, wiping the blood from his ear, which had been grazed by one of the flying bullets.

"An' this settles you!" exclaimed the big leader, as he raised his revolver to fire.

But at that instant Young Wild West sprang forward and knocked his arm upward.

"Don't you believe in fair play, stranger?" he asked, as the weapon was discharged, sending the bullet high up in the air.

"Great rattlesnakes!" cried the man, who was really a giant in stature. "What did you do that for, sonny?"

"I like to see fair play," was the cool retort. "Your man fired first, and because he got the worst of it is no reason that you should take a hand in the game. Did you come here to be peaceable citizens, or did you just ride in to clean out the camp?"

The ugly, scarred face of the fellow was the picture of amazement as he looked at the youthful figure of Wild before him.

"Who in thunder are you, boy?" he managed to blurt out.

"I go by the name of Young Wild West. Who might you be?"

"I'm Tim ther Terror, an' I hail from Roaring Creek, sonny. Jest to show you what I kin do, I'll chuck you over there on ther remains of Downie's Hotel!"

He made a grab for Wild as he said this, and then it was that he was treated to one of the greatest surprises of his life.

He never knew just how it happened, but the agile young scout stooped suddenly, and catching the giant, who claimed that he hailed from Roaring Creek, across his hip, sent him, heels up, into about the same spot that had been picked out by the giant for him to land.

A simultaneous gasp of amazement went up from the drunken horsemen.

It beat anything they had ever seen before.

Tim the Terror, to be handled like that by a mere boy! It seemed impossible.

But there was no dream about it, for there stood the boy, waiting for the giant to get up and show his hand.

Tim the Terror had landed pretty heavily, and the breath was taken from his body by the jolt.

He was not long in recovering, however, and when he did get upon his feet he had his revolver ready for action.

"Drop that gun!" cried Wild, sternly. "Drop it, or I'll drop you!"

At this juncture one of the gang raised his revolver to shoot down Young Wild West from behind.

But he never pressed the trigger, for Cheyenne Charlie divined his intention and shot him in his tracks.

That took all the fight out of the drunken crowd.

And it was well for them that they showed that they had enough of it, for the whole camp had been aroused to action and every man jack of them was covered by the miners, who were only waiting for a chance to start in shooting.

CHAPTER III.

THE NINE GOLDEN BULLETS.

Tim the Terror had dropped his revolver at Young Wild West's command, and he stood there as though waiting for further orders.

"Tim the Terror from Roaring Creek," said Wild, "you are what I call the biggest bluffer in the hills. Can you dance?"

"No, I can't dance, 'cause I never learned how," was the sullen reply.

"Well, it is time you learned, then. Now, just trot out here and try a few steps. I am going to make you dance because you called me 'sonny.' You see, I object to being called that name, as I consider that I am as much of a man as anything that straddles a horse or fires a gun in these parts. Now, then! Start her up and show us what you can do!"

The giant knew what was expected of him, but it was a very humiliating thing for him to do.

However, a pair of fearless eyes were looking at him and the muzzle of a revolver stared him in the face.

Already the miners were recovering from their anger, and broad grins could be observed on every hand.

The signal to start was a shot from Wild's revolver.

The bullet hit the heel of the Terror's left boot and sent a sort of electric shock through him.

Then he began to dance, some of his own men roaring with laughter at his ridiculous antics.

At intervals of about ten seconds Young Wild West's pistol cracked, and when the sixth shot had been fired he told him to stop.

The man did so, and when he examined his footwear he found that the heels were pretty well gone.

Three shots had hit each of them, and that fact had been the means of making the dancing livelier than it would otherwise have been.

Wild stepped back to signify that he was through, and then Rugged Pete, the mayor, made himself heard.

"It seems to me that I heard you say that you had got here a day ahead of time," he remarked, looking at Tim the Terror.

"That's right," was the reply.

"Did you come through with the four wagons an' ther gang of forty men an' one woman?"

"Yes, we are twelve of ther forty. We got tired of ther slow way the outfit was comin', so we struck out at a livelier gait a little after dinner time an' got here ahead of the rest."

"Well, I'm ther mayor of this camp, an' I want to tell yer that you will be expected to sorter behave yourselves half decent. On them grounds, I welcome yer here!"

Tim the Terror nodded to let it be known that he understood, and then walked over to where one of his men was holding his horse.

Taking the bridle rein, he did not bother to mount, but led the animal over to a point against the bluff not over two hundred feet from the camp of Wild and Charlie.

It was getting dark now, and they at once started a fire and set about making the place assume the form of a camp.

Our hero and his companion walked back and cleared away the remnants of their supper.

Wild knew that the big leader of the gang had it in for him strong, but he did not feel the least bit alarmed.

He was fully able to take care of him and that made him confident.

All he had to do was to keep a watch on him and look out for some act of treachery.

The man would not be very apt to tackle him openly, of that he was sure.

There was just ten of them and eleven horses, as two men and a horse had been killed since their arrival.

That they had brought nothing to eat with them was more than evident, for they made no signs to do the least cooking.

After a while, when Downie got his "hotel" ready to do business again, some of them went over to it and bought more whisky.

They seemed to have plenty of money, and as they acted all right, Downie was glad to sell them his wet goods.

The result was that instead of eating supper, the men filled up on bad whisky, and very peaceably, considering circumstances, went to their camp and slept it off.

Wild and Charlie did not stray far from the spot they had located upon that evening.

They were not sure that some one would not take a liking to their horses, especially Spitfire, the sorrel stallion.

And during the night only one of them slept at a time.

Experience had told them that it was not good policy to trust anybody, or, at least, not until they knew them thoroughly.

But their camp was not disturbed during the night.

They were up bright and early the next morning, and mounting their horses, they rode out to search for some game.

They had no trouble in finding what they wanted, and they were just turning to go back when they came across Tim the Terror and three of his men, who were out on the same errand as themselves.

The big man scowled fiercely when he saw Wild and made a move as though he was going to draw his revolver.

"Don't spoil a good mind," said our hero, as the fellow took his hand away from his belt again and was about to ride off. "If you feel like having a shot or two at me, go ahead."

"I don't bear you no grudge," was the reply in a tone that belied the words.

"I am glad of that, for I don't want to have any one an enemy to me. I am pretty sure that there is not an honest man of my acquaintance who is really down on me. I generally try to do the right thing with everybody, and if now and then a fellow makes a mistake and takes me for a boy tenderfoot, it is not my fault if he gets the worst of it."

As Young Wild West said this the Terror turned and looked at him from head to foot, as though he was not yet sure what sort of a looking person he was.

"You are ther best I ever struck," he said with a nod. "I've tackled men a good deal bigger than I am—bad men, too, and I have always come out first. You gave me ther surprise of my life last night, an' I ain't afraid to admit it. I may ask you to give me a lesson or two some time."

"All right. If you really mean that you will find me ready and willing."

"I do mean it, Young Wild West. I have been very sore on yer ever since you took ther starch out of me last night. I felt like sending a bullet through you just a minute or two ago when you run afoul of us sudden like. But I don't feel that way any more, Young Wild West. What you have been sayin' to me jest now makes me like you!"

With this the giant and his companions went off to continue their hunt.

"What do you think of that?" asked Cheyenne Charlie.

"Well, I must say that I believe the man meant just what he said. His tone of voice was as sincere as any I have ever heard. Still, I am not going to put much faith in what he said."

"No. I wouldn't, either, if I was you."

The two now rode back into camp.

They had shot a young deer and four partridges, and the latter they intended to have for breakfast.

They had not told their friends in Weston that they intended to stay over night in the new mining camp, so they were not surprised just as they sat down to broiled partridges and coffee, to see Jim Dart and Jack Robedee show up.

The newcomers, who were chums of Wild's, located their camp the first thing and promptly rode up and dismounted.

"You are fine fellows, I must say," said Jim. "Arietta and Anna, your girls, got to worrying so badly about you not showing up last night that we set out before daylight this morning to look up up. And here you are, sitting before a fire eating a breakfast that the smell of makes a fellow's mouth water."

"Sit right down!" exclaimed Wild. "A partridge apiece ought to be enough for us. If you are hungry, sit right down, and when you get through eating we will tell you what kept us over night."

Jim Dart said no more. He was as hungry as a bear, and so was Robedee.

They had some bread with them, and this helped to make the meal go better.

When they were through eating and Jack had furnished Charlie with a pipeful of tobacco, Jim looked expectantly at Wild.

"Well, I suppose you want to know what kept us over night," said the young scout. "It is easy to explain," and then he told them all that happened.

"A narrow escape, Charlie, old fellow," observed Jack. "They must have been fools to take you for a horse thief."

"I'll admit that I thought I was a goner," retorted the scout. "But when I heard the crack of a rifle and felt myself drop to the ground I changed my opinion. I knew it was Wild who had fired the shot, and I knew he was going to save me. You ought to have seen how he handled that crowd. I really believe that if they had showed fight he would have shot about half of them an' had ther others on ther run in less than a minute!"

"Hold on!" interrupted Wild. "Go it a little mild and it will sound better."

"No, it won't. I am only tellin' what was what. They know you well enough to believe what I say."

"I guess we do," nodded Dart.

"So ther real cause of yer stayin' over night here was to wait an' see ther four wagons an' ther forty men an' one woman come in?" said Jack.

"That's it!" answered Charlie.

"An' a dozen of 'em got here a day ahead of time an' made things lively for a while?"

"Yes."

"Well, all I kin say is that we missed a whole lot of fun by not coming with you yesterday afternoon."

"We won't be disappointed altogether," said Jim. "The biggest part of the outfit hasn't got here yet. There are four wagons, twenty-eight men and the woman due yet."

"That's right," laughed Wild. "According to what the Terror said, they ought to fetch up here some time this forenoon."

"Well, we will wait till they come, and then we will all ride back to Weston together," observed Jim.

A little later the four took a walk over to the "hotel" of Nugget Flats.

The mayor was there, and Wild introduced Jim and Jack.

"These fellows are our partners," he added. "They have been through a little of everything with me, and they are not the kind of folks who show the white feather, no matter how great the odds are against them. Cheyenne Charlie, Jim Dart and Jack Robedee are my partners, not only in business, but in about everything else. There are no three men living who could take their places in my heart!"

Young Wild West grew quite eloquent when he said this.

It was the first time he had ever made such an announcement in public, and the three he referred to not only felt pleased but deeply grateful.

Tim the Terror came along just then, and, turning to Wild, he said:

"I'd give a whole lot to hear you say that about me, Young Wild West. Of course, I don' s'pose you ever will; but I'm goin' to see to it that you never have occasion to say anything bad about me. You've made a man of me, you have! I've been doin' a whole lot of talkin' to ther boys since we met this mornin' on ther mountainside. Now, what do you s'pose I've come here to Downie's for?"

"I don't know, unless it is to get a drink," answered Young Wild West, failing to get a line on the big fellow.

"No! That ain't what I come here for, though I may get a drink, too. I come over here to pay Downie a bill."

"You don't owe me anything," said the whisky seller in surprise.

"Yes, I do. Where do you s'pose we got ther whisky we got drunk with yesterday afternoon? You had some comin' on ther wagons, didn't yer?"

"Yes."

"Well, we helped ourselves to what we wanted of ther stuff

out of one of ther barrels, an' here's fifty dollars to pay ther bill!"

He laid the money on the rough board that answered for a counter as he spoke, and Downie took it hesitatingly.

"Mebbe you didn't drink up that much," he ventured.

"Well, if we didn't we come putty near to it, anyhow. Take it, an' say no more about it."

"Well, I'll stand treat, then. Step up, all hands!"

Everybody took a little whisky but Wild and Jim.

They simply said they did not care for the stuff and that settled it.

The Terror went back to his camp a few minutes later and was seen to be talking very earnestly to his followers.

The result of the talk was that they all struck in and staked out claims and went to work.

Just before noon the giant walked over to where our four friends were sitting beneath the shade of the tree.

"Young Wild West," said he, "I worked in a place where they smelt gold an' silver once, an' while I was there I moulded some bullets out of gold. There was only nine of them that was perfect, so I chucked ther rest back in ther pot. I've carried them nine golden bullets ever since, an' now I am goin' to give 'em to you for luck."

He produced a greasy leather pouch as he spoke and emptied the contents in the palm of his hand.

Sure enough, there were nine bullets of gold there, and they were just the size that were used in the regulation army revolvers.

"If you really want to make me a present of them I will take them," said Wild. "I will fit them in cartridges and keep them for luck. It may be that I might use them, but if I do it will only be on occasions of great importance."

"Take ther nine golden bullets, an' welcome!"

CHAPTER IV.

A LIVELY TIME AT NUGGET FLATS.

The eyes of Tim the Terror flashed with pride as he handed his rather peculiar gift to Young Wild West.

Bullets were very plentiful in that part of the country and were among the things that were very essential to man's success; but who had ever seen them made of gold?

Lead was the metal that was invariably used for that purpose, but here were nine bullets moulded of virgin gold!

Wild took the pouch, and after allowing his friends to have a look at the bullets, dropped them back into the pouch and placed it in his pocket.

The Terror appeared to be more than pleased, and when the boy walked out of the tent he followed him.

"There's worse men than I are comin' through with the gang that's due here putty soon," he said. "There's a feller among 'em what bears me a grudge, an' I s'pose we'll have it out as soon as he gits here."

"What has he got a grudge against you for?" asked Wild.

"Well, you see, there was two separate gangs of us in ther party. I was a sort of leader to ther men what come here with me, and this other feller had a gang of ten men who put great faith in him. It was ther other gang what really stole ther whisky what belongs to this man here. After they had got it we stole it from them an' then lit out to git here ahead of 'em."

"I see. It was quite a neat trick you played on them. But as you have settled with Downie the matter ought to be dropped."

"Yes, but them fellers will want to git square on us for ther trick, 'cause it dished 'em out of gittin' a bit of ther stuff. Ther men in charge of ther wagons found out that ther whisky had been taken just about ther time that we started. That

makes it dead certain that them fellers wouldn't have a show to git any more."

"Unless they put up a fight for it."

"Well, they couldn't do a thing then. Them men in charge of ther outfit would mow 'em down like grass. No! They'd know better than to start a fight to git ther whisky. I'll bet that there ain't a gill been taken out of ther barrels since we left yesterday."

"What sort of a fellow is the leader of this gang?" Wild asked, thinking that perhaps the Terror wanted him to take a hand if it came to a fight.

"He's Big Frank, from Deadwood. He may be a little heavier than I be, but not quite so tall."

"Well, you are not afraid of him, are you?"

"Me! Well, I guess not! Oh, I'll fight him all right ther minute he starts her up. But, say!"

"Well?"

"I'd give a whole lot to see him tackle you. I jist want to see you surprise him, like yer did me. That would do me an awful lot of good, Young Wild West!"

Wild smiled.

"Well, if he bothers me I will try and give him a little lesson," he answered.

This seemed to satisfy the big man, and he walked away.

Those of the men in Nugget Flats who possessed picks, shovels and sieves were at work, and the rest were hanging around, just killing time and waiting for the wagons to arrive.

A man with a speculative turn of mind was coming with it to open a store at the Flats.

He was a relative of Downie, and he was bringing a good stock with him, with orders left behind him for more.

Big Tim and his men had been depending upon this man to buy their mining tools, and there were several others in the camp waiting for his arrival on the same account.

It was just a little before noon when it was announced that the outfit was in sight.

Then everybody quit work to give the new arrivals a welcome.

Eleven horsemen came in ahead of the rest, and Wild knew right away that they were the ones who had stolen the whisky and then had it stolen from them.

Tim was ready for trouble, for he had his men grouped off to one side and he stood in front of them, so he was bound to be seen by the newcomers.

It was quite natural that the outfit should stop in front of the tent occupied by Downie.

It was the only business place at the camp, and the sign in front of it was sufficient to draw the crowd.

The advance guard very quickly "liquored up" and then came out of the place and looked around.

Their leader was a big, stout man, weighing at least two hundred and fifty pounds.

He possessed fully as many scars as did Tim the Terror, and, if possible, he was a great deal uglier in appearance.

He was not long in making himself heard, and when he spoke there was no difficulty in hearing what he said, since his voice was as loud as a fog-horn.

"So this is Nugget Flats, hey?" he roared out. "Well, pards, I am glad to be with you. An' so is these friends of mine here. We are all peaceful an' quiet as long as we are let alone, but cross us, and then look out! As I look around I see that you have got a gang of thieves here, an' I am sorry to see that, for ther place looks very promisin'."

This was, of course, intended for Big Tim and his men.

Everybody in the camp had heard the story of how the whisky had been stolen from the wagons, and they also were aware of the fact that it had been paid for

They expected to see the Terror resent the insult at once, and he intended to, but did not get the chance.

Young Wild West got in ahead of him.

"See here, my friend," he said, as he coolly walked up to the fellow. "Don't you know that you ought not to make such remarks as that? A gang of thieves is a hard name for a lot of honest men to be called, so I would advise you take that back."

Big Frank looked at the boy for the space of a second, and then broke into a laugh.

"Why, you young whipper-snapper, you!" he cried. "I've a notion to spank you!"

"Well, go ahead and do it, then. But I will bet you a hundred dollars that you will apologize for calling the people of Nugget Flats a gang of thieves."

"An' I'll bet a hundred that I won't! There are ther thieves right over there—Tim ther Terror, who hails from Roaring Creek, an' ther gang he's got with him. They stole whisky from ther wagons, an' then rode off with it an' got here ahead of us."

"Big Frank, that's a lie!" cried Tim, making a step forward, his hand on the butt of his revolver.

"Hold on!" thundered Young Wild West. "The first thing on this program is a spanking. I am the one to be spanked, and this big bluffer, who calls himself Big Frank, is the one who is going to do the spanking. Put up your guns, now!"

Big Frank looked in amazement when he saw how readily Wild was obeyed.

Half a dozen of the men had drawn their revolvers, and they put them back in their belts at once.

He still had his hand on his revolver, though, and showed every sign of being very angry.

"Let go of that!" said Wild. "You ain't afraid of me, are you? You said you had a notion to spank me, so go ahead and do it. I'll guarantee that no one will interfere while you are trying it."

This so enraged the man that he took his hand from his belt and made a sudden grab for Young Wild West.

But the young scout was expecting just such a move on his part, and he very cleverly stepped aside and slapped the fellow across the mouth.

A shout of laughter went up at this, and almost blind with rage, Big Frank threw himself forward and made another savage grab.

"I'll spank yer!" he howled. "I'll wring your neck, too, that's what I'll do!"

This time Wild lowered his head and darted between the big fellow's legs.

Up went his muscular frame, and over his head went Big Frank! He landed heavily on his stomach, and the wind was completely knocked out of him.

Then, while Tim, the Terror, laughed until his jaws ached, Young Wild West calmly took a seat upon the prostrate form and gave the big bluffer a dose of something that he had not had since he was a little child!

He took care to strike in such a manner with the flat of his hand that each blow sounded like the crack of a pistol.

It was certainly the greatest performance the crowd had ever seen, and the laughter and applause that went up made the welkin ring.

When our hero felt his victim make a move to throw him off he made a leap and was out of harm's way in a flash.

Big Frank rolled over and made a grab for his shooter.

"Don't touch that!" commanded Wild. "If you do you will die right where you are."

"He ain't fit to die jest yet," spoke up the mayor. "He knows it, an' that's why he's so willin' to let go of the gun."

There was a laugh at this, for Big Frank certainly did draw his hand away in a hurry.

"Now, get up," said Wild.

The man did so.

"Well, how did you like the spanking?"

Big Frank was just boiling over with rage, but there was enough fear mixed in it to make him answer in a civil manner.

"Young feller, you surprise me," he answered. "If I ain't axin' too many questions, I'd like to know who you are."

"Have you ever heard of Young Wild West?"

"Yes," and the big man gave a start.

"Well, that's my name."

"Well, I ain't sayin' that I'm glad I met you, but I am satisfied, Young Wild West."

"I am glad of that."

"So am I, Big Frank!"

It was Tim the Terror who said this.

"Wait a minute," interrupted Wild. "I said I would bet a hundred dollars that this man would apologize for calling the people of Nugget Flats a gang of thieves."

"I will," promptly spoke up Big Frank. "I didn't mean that all ther men in this town was thieves; I meant that for Tim, 'her Terror, an' his gang. I say that yet!"

"You do, hey?"

The two big, powerful men stood glaring at each other like a pair of enraged lions.

Each had his hand on the butt of his revolver, and the miners were stepping aside so as to be out of range when the shooting began.

But again did Young Wild West interfere.

"Don't use your shooters or knives," he said. "You are both regular giants! Settle your dispute with your hands and feet. I'll be referee."

Strange to say, this proposition was satisfactory to both of them.

They took off their belts in double-quick time and handed them to Young Wild West.

Everybody grinned but the close friends of the two men.

They were anxious as to how the battle would turn out.

"Before you start, gentlemen," spoke up Wild, "I would suggest that each of you should select a second. That is the way they do it in the East when they hold a prize-fight, you know."

"That's it!" cried the "mayor," stepping up. "We may as well have this thing done in ther right way. It is something new to see a regular heavyweight fight in this part of ther country, an' though it ain't goin' to be a prize-fight, it ought to be run off in proper shape."

"Well, then," said Tim the Terror, "I'll take you for my second, if you'll serve."

"Sartin I will."

"Then I'll take an outsider, too," and Big Frank beckoned the Dazzler to come over.

The little man did not refuse.

"As I understand it," he remarked, "this is goin' to be a rough-an'-tumble fight."

"That's right!" exclaimed Young Wild West. "I am the referee, and I'll see to it that no weapons will be used except what nature has provided them with."

The two men began rolling up their sleeves, and the grinning miners looked on expectantly.

"Are you ready?" called out Young Wild West.

"Yes!" came the answer from both.

"Then sail in!"

The giants rushed at each other and clinched instantly.

Neither of them understood the least bit of the art of boxing.

They meant to crush each other by main strength, it seemed.

For the first half minute it was nothing more than a wrestling match, and a very awkward one at that.

Then Tim kicked Frank hard on the shins.

The stout man uttered a yell of rage and pain and kicked back.

It became a kicking match then, and the heavy boots began to fly about so recklessly that with one accord the men broke their hold.

"Use your fists," said the Dazzler to Big Frank.

"That's it! Use your'n, too!" cried Rugged Pete, the mayor, touching the Terror on the arm.

As if it was the first time that they had thought of it, the belligerents did use their fists.

They began to fire sledge-hammer blows at each other, and soon both were bleeding from the nose.

Just as they were becoming pretty well tired out the Terror let a savage left-hander go at his opponent, and it accidentally caught him on the side of the jaw.

That ended the fight!

There was no one half so much surprised as was Tim when he saw Big Frank drop senseless to the ground.

At this juncture a tall, raw-boned woman of uncertain age came rushing to the spot.

"Who wants to fight?" she called out. "I am Solemn Sal, an' I never stands any foolin'!"

CHAPTER V.

SOLEMN SAL.

Young Wild West looked at the woman with no little interest.

Her restless, piercing eyes set far back in her head and her long, scraggy hair, hanging over her shoulders, caused him to form the opinion at once that she was not altogether right in the head.

She wore a well-worn skirt of buckskin that hung a trifle below her knees and covered the tops of a pair of riding boots.

A belt that fairly bristled with weapons held the skirt about a man's shirt of scarlet flannel, and her head was topped off by a big sombrero with one side pinned up to the crown and an eagle feather sticking in it.

Taking all in all, the woman certainly made a striking appearance.

After her introductory remarks she looked in silence at the unconscious form of Big Frank, and then turning to the Terror, calmly said:

"Did you put the galoot to sleep?"

"I reckon I did," was the reply.

"You did, hey? Mebbe you think you could do it to me!" and before any one could divine her intention she began shooting all around his head.

The men scattered in every direction. It seemed that they were more afraid of a revolver in the hands of a woman than they were if it had been in the hands of a man.

"Hey, there!" exclaimed Tim. "Go it a liddle easier, my dear woman. I don't want to fight you."

"Oh! Don't you?" and there was a faint look of surprise on the face of the woman as she ceased shooting.

"There's no one as wants to fight you, Sal," said the man who had been in charge of the outfit which had just arrived, as he took her gently by the arm. "Come away, now. You know I told you I would help to find ther galoot as shot your husband in ther back, but I don't think he are here, though."

The look of eagerness that came upon the pinched face when the man spoke to her died away as the last word left his lips, and she allowed him to lead her back to the camp that the new arrivals had started to make.

"I always hate to see a person what's gone daft," said Jack

Robedee, "especially a woman. It gives me ther shivers to see how they act. I hope she never gits mad at me for anything."

"The way I take it," observed Wild, "is that her husband got killed by some coward, and that she went crazy over it, and is continually on the search for the slayer. It is a pity that she can't find him."

"That's what I say," nodded Charlie. "If ther poor creeter could git her revenge her reason might come back to her."

"I hardly think it would," spoke up Jim. "She is too far gone in the upper story. There is only one way to treat her, and that is to humor her in everything she says. But as we are not going to stay here very long, it is not likely that we will be bothered by her."

Big Frank had now come to his senses, and he was sitting on the ground, looking about him in a dazed manner.

One of his followers came over and assisted him to his feet.

He looked around as he got up, but without a word followed the man from the spot.

"I guess he is satisfied," remarked Wild. "He ought to be if he is not, for that was a terrible blow Tim gave him."

Our friends now walked over to where Solemn Sal, as she was called, was fixing up her camp.

She was the one woman who had come in with the outfit, and in spite of her being partly out of her mind, she was well provided with the common necessities.

She had a good horse, cooking utensils, a couple of woolen blankets, a rubber one and many other things that a man would not think of bringing with him on such a journey.

The woman did not mind the staring crowd of men in the least, but hummed an air as she put the things to rights.

With the aid of two stakes which she drove in the ground, she turned the rubber blanket into a tent, leaving one end open and the other against a big rock. She then spread the woolen blankets under this and turned her attention to building a fire.

The spot Solemn Sal had selected for her abiding place while in Nugget Flats was well away from any of the rest.

When she began to cook her noonday meal Young Wild West and his companions walked away.

The new storekeeper, who had not yet had a chance to pitch his tent, was already doing a rushing business in the sale of his goods, and as fast as the men got the tools they needed to work with they went to their various claims and began to dig for all they were worth.

Before night several had turned their attention to the building of log shanties, and this made it look as though they intended to stay awhile.

Already several fine nuggets had been taken from the earth at only a depth of a few inches, and this was enough to make the miners satisfied that there was plenty more to be found if they dug a little deeper.

Our friends did not try their luck at mining there.

They intended to ride over to Weston before dark and leave the new camp to hustle along in its own way.

Just as they were thinking of starting Solemn Sal came walking over to them.

"Gentlemen," said she, in a perfectly sane way, "won't you let me tell your fortunes before you go? I make no charge, but you kin give me what you like."

"I'll let you tell mine," Jack Robedee responded quickly. "If you tell it good I'll give you a five-dollar gold piece."

Wild and the others laughingly looked on as the woman took Jack's hand.

"You have a tender heart," she began, as she looked at the lines of his palm. "That is a very good trait in you. You are also honest and determined and you have a long life ahead of you."

"That's good!" exclaimed Jack.

"Don't interrupt me," and Solemn Sal shook her head warningly.

"You have been disappointed in love several times," she continued. "But each time you got over it very quickly. Let me see. Ah! you are in love at this very moment. The girl is rather young for you, but you will marry her. Her face is not a very pleasing one, but her heart is in the right place and she fairly adores you——"

"That's enough!" cried Jack, his face as red as a beet. "Here's your money; take it an' welcome."

Cheyenne Charlie burst into a roar of laughter, and Wild and Jim joined in.

"I have told him the truth," said Solemn Sal. "I will swear to that. I kin read a person's palm right every time. There is more that I could tell him, but he does not want me to."

"I've got enough," spoke up Jack. "Try some of the rest."

But none of the rest cared to have their fortunes told just then.

They put the woman off by telling her that they would give her a chance some other time.

"Wild, an idea has just struck me!" exclaimed Jim Dart, as Solemn Sal walked away.

"That's good, Jim. What is the idea?"

"Don't you think the girls over in Weston would enjoy having their fortunes told?"

"They certainly would. But could we induce Solemn Sal to ride over there?"

"No, I don't think we could, but suppose Charlie and I ride over to-night and bring them all over in the morning? It would be a novelty for them to spend a day in this place, anyway."

"By jove!" said Young Wild West. "I believe your idea is a good one, Jim. What do you say, Charlie and Jack?"

"Just ther thing," answered Charlie. "I know my wife, Anna, would enjoy it, an' as there ain't no renegades or Injuns around at present, there wouldn't be ther least danger in makin' ther trip over here. I say yes to ther proposition—yes, by all means."

"An' I say that whatever suits you fellers, suits me," chimed in Robedee.

That settled it right then and there.

Young Wild West and his friends always had a quick way of settling matters without argument, and five minutes later Jim and Charlie were ready to mount their horses and leave Nugget Flats.

When the two had gone, Wild started in to set the nine golden bullets Tim the Terror had given him in cartridges, so he could use them to shoot with in case he wanted to.

He first had to remove the lead bullets, but this was an easy thing for him to do, as he had often doctored up his own cartridges.

"They are size thirty-two," he said to Jack, "and they will just fit that silver-mounted six-shooter of mine that I don't carry in my belt."

"That's right. Who do you s'pose will be ther first feller what gits one of them valuable bullets in his carcass?" Jack answered.

"That is something that I cannot tell."

"You might be able to tell if you had let ther old woman tell your fortune."

"That's so. Say! I think I know who the girl is she referred to and said you would marry, Jack."

"No, you can't, 'cause there ain't no such girl."

"I am inclined to think there is. It strikes me that Martha Goff, one of the girls we saved from old Crawling Snake's band of redskins, is the party. I noticed that she often cast sheep's eyes at you."

Robedee blushed, and then Wild knew he had hit the nail right on the head.

"It seems to me, Jack, that Solemn Sal told your fortune pretty straight, if I know anything about it. This talk of yours about women is all bosh, in my opinion. You are going to be married to Martha Goff some day, and I will bet an ounce of gold on it!"

"Well, I'll take that bet!"

The two shook hands, not because they wanted to make the bet more binding, but just because it was a way they both had.

Wild worked away with the cartridges and bullets for half an hour.

Then he had made the change to his full satisfaction.

He loaded the silver-mounted revolver with six of the gold bullets and placed the other three in his pocket.

He did not carry this particular revolver in his belt, but had a pocket made in his shirt just to fit it.

This he had caused to be done lately, thinking that perhaps the next time he was surprised and captured by enemies they might overlook it when disarming him.

If they were not too particular this might work.

Wild put the handsome shooter in the pocket made for it and said:

"I hope that every time I shoot one of those bullets it will be done in a good cause; and I also want each of them to hit the point that I aim at."

"You kin bet they will come putty near doin' that," said Jack.

CHAPTER VI.

NINE VILLAINS, TRIED AND TRUE TO THEIR CALLING.

The sun had not been up over three hours the next morning when a party of seven rode down the mountain side and across the mouth of the gulch that opened up in front of the new mining town of Nugget Flats.

There were two males and five females in the party, and they were all in excellent spirits, judging by their merry laughter and conversation.

The males were Jim Dart and Cheyenne Charlie, and the females consisted of Arietta Murdock, Eloise Gardner, Anna, Martha Goff and Nellie Elton.

Arietta was Young Wild West's girl, Eloise was Jim's, and Anna was the wife of Cheyenne Charlie.

Martha and Nellie were two young girls who had not been in Weston very long. They had been captured from a wagon train by Indians and rescued by Wild and his friends, as some of our readers know.

Nellie Elton had been a very forward girl and had got Wild into serious trouble with his sweetheart by her making love to him, but she had tamed down wonderfully when she realized her mistake and had remained that way ever since.

Still she was the life of the party, and her merry talk and her perfect singing kept them all in a good humor on the way over from Weston.

Young Wild West and Jack Robedee were standing watching the erection of a shanty which the storekeeper was having built when the party entered the town.

Wild at once ran forward to meet them, Jack blushing like a schoolboy and following more leisurely.

"So this is Nugget Flats, is it?" remarked Arietta, after the usual greetings had been exchanged.

"Yes," answered Wild. "What do you think of the place?"

"Oh! It is all right. Weston was no larger than this once."

"No, nor as large," spoke up Anna.

"Those are true words, all right," laughed Wild.

"Laying all joking aside," said Jim, "it strikes me that this place will some day in the near future be as big as Weston is

now. It has all the chances to improve rapidly. There is plenty of gold lying about close to the surface, and if plenty of gold won't put a real boom on the town I don't know what will."

All were willing to agree to this.

While they had been talking quite a number of the miners had gathered around them at a respectful distance.

They were admiring the good looks of the ladies.

"This is what I call a treat, Young Wild West," said the mayor. "You ought to receive a vote of thanks, just for bringing ther ladies over to ther flats. Ther looks of 'em is enough to cheer up ther most downhearted man in ther whole world."

"That's right," replied Wild, good-naturedly.

Then he conducted the new arrivals to the camp.

"The man who just spoke is Rugged Pete, the mayor of Nugget Flats," he explained. "He is a fine man and will be a great help to the town."

"How old is he?" inquired Nellie Elton.

"About forty, I should judge," Wild answered.

"He would be a fine-looking man if he was to shave off that beard of his."

"She's fell in love with ther mayor, I guess," whispered Jack Robedee to Cheyenne Charlie.

"Looks like it," was the reply.

The new arrivals had breakfasted before leaving Weston, so there was now nothing to do but to fix up suitable quarters for the ladies.

It did not take them a great while to do this, since Jim and Charlie had been thoughtful enough to bring along rubber blankets to make tents with.

While the work was going on, Wild, Jack and Charlie had considerable fun at Jack's expense.

They told the girls about him having his fortune told, and even threw out hints to the effect that they had an idea that they knew who the girl in the case was.

Only one of the girls knew who they were referring to on the start, and that was Martha Goff herself.

The fact of the matter was that she did like Jack.

When Nellie finally caught on she began to tease Martha at a great rate.

The girl did no end of blushing, but took it good-naturedly.

Pretty soon Wild took a walk away from the camp, and when he came back a few minutes later he was accompanied by Solemn Sal.

The woman certainly did look solemn enough just then, and when they had been introduced to her the girls told one another so.

"Now, then, here is a chance for all of you to get your fortunes told," said Wild. "Who is going to be the first?"

No one wanted to be the first, so it was finally settled that if Young Wild West would have his palm read Arietta would come in second.

Of course the young scout agreed to this.

The girls had been brought over from Weston to have a good time, and he meant that they should have it.

He gave his left hand to the woman and in slow and measured tones she went on to tell him that he had a long life before him, that he would be very rich in the world's goods, that he would marry before he reached his twenty-fifth birthday and that a number of children would be born to his faithful and pretty wife.

Of course she said a whole lot more—enough to satisfy anybody who believed in that sort of business—but that was the substance of it.

Then it came Arietta's turn.

She, too, was to be very long-lived, and she was to marry a rich young man who would never do anything else than treat her kindly and always love her.

This caused all hands to laugh, and Et turned a deep crimson when she looked at Wild.

The next was Nellie Elton, and when Solemn Sal declared that she would marry a man who was old enough to be her father in a very short time, and that he would possess a smooth-shaven face, Jack Robedee remarked that he guessed he would go and tell the mayor to shave off his beard right away.

Solemn Sal might have been lacking of something in her head, but she was keen enough to take in all what the young people were laughing and joking about, and when it came Martha's time to have her palm read she knew pretty well what the majority of them wanted her to say.

And she was not slow in saying it, either.

When she had gone through the first part of the "fortune" she drew the girl's hand a little closer to her eyes and gave a start.

"Ah! What is this I see?" she exclaimed. "You are to become a bride very soon, I see. Yes, the happy event will take place within two months. You——"

Martha attempted to draw her hand away, but the woman held fast to it.

"Wait!" said she. "I see more. The man you are to marry is not far from you now. Aye! He is within a few feet of you. He has been disappointed in what he thought was love many times before, but he never loved any one as he now loves you."

Cheyenne Charlie could not contain himself any longer, and he burst into a roar of laughter.

And when he laughed all the rest save Jack and Martha joined in.

That capped the climax of all the fun, and Wild tossed the old woman a couple of gold pieces and told her that was all.

She walked away more than pleased, and leaving them about the same.

But while all this fun was going on, let us see what was taking place in another part of the town, or camp, as it yet really was.

Big Frank was still smarting over the way he had been treated at the hands of Tim the Terror and Young Wild West.

He had brooded over it the biggest part of the night, and now he hated Young Wild West to such an extent that he was determined to kill him.

As he went about the place that morning he had no difficulty in picking out several men there who did not like Wild's way of doing things.

He got to be friends with a number of these in short order.

Two or three of them were his own followers, and the rest were picked from the Terror's crowd and the men who had been in the camp from the start.

As might be supposed, these men were villains.

They were not honest, like the majority who had come there, but had come there for the purpose of making their living by robbing others.

These men, seven all told, were having a secret conversation when Jim Dart and Cheyenne Charlie rode in with the women folks.

"Ah! What do you call this?" exclaimed Big Frank. "Look at ther putty gals!"

"That's two of Young Wild West's gang with 'em," said one of the men. "What do yer s'pose they are comin' over here for?"

"Lookin' fer husbands, I reckon," and the big man grinned and nodded in a knowing way.

"Gee!" and then the seven men looked at one another.

"It would sorter make Young Wild West feel sick if some of them females were kidnapped, wouldn't it?" and Big Frank

shifted the chew of tobacco he had inside his mouth from one side to the other.

"It would be great, an' no mistake about that!" cried one of the men, whose name was John Cole. "I've been lookin' for a wife these last several years, an' can't say as I ever seen one as suited me any better nor that one on ther white horse."

He pointed to Nellie Elton, who certainly presented a very jaunty appearance just then.

"An' that one who's smilin' so lovin' like at Young Wild West would be my choice," grunted Big Frank, nodding toward Arietta.

The others expressed their particular favorites, too, and as there were not enough of the females to go around, they got into an argument then and there.

But Big Frank soon stopped this.

"That won't do, boys," he said. "Ther first thing to do is to get ther gals; then it will be time enough to settle ther marryin' business. Now, if you people are willin' to take a solemn oath never to tell a word of what we are talkin' about now, or that we may talk about, or do hereafter, I'll put a proposition to yer."

The six men with him promptly agreed to do this.

Just as they had promised in as solemn manner as they could two more men came walking that way.

They were a couple of those who had been so anxious to hang Cheyenne Charlie for a horse-thief, and they were bitterly cursing Young Wild West and his friends as they walked along.

The seven villains were seated in a little glen near the bank of a running stream, and they could not be seen by the approaching men and could hear just what was being said.

"Them two is all right, cap," said John Cole. "I know just what they are, an' if there's room for 'em, they ought to be in our gang."

"If you know 'em, go out an' have a talk with 'em," was the quick reply. "I don't know as nine would be too many in our gang. But any more I wouldn't tolerate. Go an' talk to 'em, John."

Cole did saunter leisurely out of the glen, and hailing the two men, soon engaged them in conversation.

The result was that they very quickly walked back to the glen with him.

One of the other men knew them and greeted them warmly. Then they were introduced to the rest.

Big Frank sized them up to his full satisfaction and at once came to the conclusion that they were all right.

He told John Cole to go ahead and tell them what they had been called for, and Cole lost no time in doing so.

"Will we stick to you? Well, I guess so!" exclaimed one.

"I'm willin' to do anything that will be ther means of cuttin' that boy they call Young Wild West's tongue," chimed in the other. "I'm satisfied that if he stays around these diggin's long there won't be no show for any such people as us."

"Have you seen ther putty gals them fellows have brought over here?" asked Big Frank.

"Oh, yes! We seen them."

"Well, what do yer think of ther nine of us drawin' for wives? S'pose we was to take five matches, five of 'em full length an' ther other four with ther brimstones broke off, an' draw fer ther gals? Ther fellow as was lucky enough to draw ther first match of full size would have first choice; an' so on, till they was all drawn. Four of us would draw blanks, but it would be a square shake, jest the same. I'm s'posed to be ther leader of this gang, but I'll go in ther thing on an ekal footin' with ther rest."

"That's ther best thing I've been asked to go into in many a long day!" exclaimed one of the two who had been called into

the assemblage. "Yer kin count me inter this game, heart an' soul."

"Me, too," the other hastened to affirm.

"Well, boys, I'm mighty glad to hear you talk that way. Now, ther question is, are yer willin' to take an oath to stick by me in this here game?"

"Sartin!" the men replied in a breath.

"All right. Now, here's nine of us, all men of one mind. We are all opposed to Young Wild West an' any one as sticks up for him. Jest take a hold of hands an' form a circle around me an' repeat after me what I'm going to say."

The eight men did so, and then the big villain said:

"We do promise an' swear that we will always do as our leader, Big Frank, says, providin' he uses us right; an' that we will put Young Wild West out of ther way ther first good chance that we get. We likewise agree to draw lots for ther five wimmen that's come to Nugget Flats an' be satisfied ther way ther lottery turns out. Ther said five wimmen to be ther wives of ther five as is lucky enough to draw an' pick 'em out, by fair means or foul, which means that if ther wimmen object to marryin' ther ones as draws 'em they'll have to be ther wives anyhow. We also promise an' swear to keep secret everything we do an' make this a permanent band of nine with Big Frank as their leader, to make our livin' at ther expense of others. To all of which we pledge ourselves to stick to, an' if any one of us fails he is to be put to death by any one of ther nine as finds out that he is a traitor."

The men repeated this oath after him in slow, measured tones, and they all appeared to be terribly in earnest.

CHAPTER VII.

INTO A TRAP.

The nine villains were in high glee after they had perfected their organization and taken the oath of allegiance.

Big Frank was the proudest of the lot, for the oath he had administered was similar to the one he had heard in his early days.

Visions of great wealth floated before the eyes of the man, for he figured that after Young Wild West and his friends had been put out of the way he would have plain sailing and eventually become one of the greatest bandit kings of the West.

"I tell you, boys!" he said. "Nine is an odd number, an' we are odd men. We are bound to win out in this game, 'cause somethin' tells me we will. Now, let's git this organization of ourn in a ship-shape order. Who in ther crowd kin write a good hand?"

"I kin," replied the fellow called John Cole. "I never learned a whole lot when I went to school, but I always could write putty good, for all that. I s'pose it come to me natural, like such things generally does. What do you want me to do, Captain Frank?"

"I want you to write all our names down on a paper, so's we'll always know who is who, an' I kin call 'em off an' git an answer from each feller every time I do. If any one is unlucky enough to step off any time his name kin be crossed off, an' then we'll look for another man to fill his place."

"Well, all right, then," and Cole produced a rather greasy looking note-book and a pencil from his pocket.

He then took down all the names as they were given to him, after which he handed the book to Big Frank.

"Now, then," observed the big scoundrel, "I'm goin' to call off these names, an' I want each one to answer 'here,' or 'present,' as he sees fit."

Then he began:

"John Cole."

"Here!"

"Aleck Romer."

"Present!"

"Uncle Reid."

"Here!"

"Dick Rupert."

"Here!"

"Rudolph Hines."

"On deck!"

"Bill Fisher."

"I'm here every time, cap!"

"Will Hewitt."

"Here!"

"Asa Wood."

"Present!"

"Big Frank, I'm here, of course, or I wouldn't be readin' off ther names," and with that the captain of the nine villains tore the leaf from the notebook and thrust it in his pocket.

"Your name was ther first on ther list, cap," spoke up Cole, as he took the book handed to him.

"I know that, but it's proper to call yourself last, you know. I know enough about etticat for that."

At this the men looked at each other and nodded approvingly.

They were of the opinion that Big Frank was pretty well versed in the ways of the world.

And the fact was that the man never felt so important in all his life.

Just as they were getting ready to disperse John Cole said: "Cap, how about drawin' lots for ther wives five of us is goin' to git?"

"Well, I s'pose it would be a good idea to do that now," was the reply.

"You said you was goin' ter do ther drawin' with nine little sticks of different lengths, didn't you?"

"Yes, that's a square way, ain't it?"

"Couldn't be any squarer."

"Not much it couldn't!" chimed in one of the others.

"We'll get nine sticks an' break 'em off so's there ain't two ther same length. Then we'll draw 'em. There's nine of us to draw, but only five of us kin win. Ther five what gets ther longest sticks win an' the other four don't."

"Well, then," said Cole, "why can't we take nine matches, as we said first? We kin break four of 'em off, an' leave ther rest whole. Ther ones what gits ther whole ones will be ther lucky ones. That would be ther best, I think, 'cause ther matches will all look alike, an' ther pieces of sticks wouldn't, maybe."

This seemed to suit all hands, so Big Frank asked who had as many as nine matches about them.

The fellow called Bill Fisher quickly produced a box of them.

Big Frank picked out nine matches and broke the ends from four of them so the men could see him.

"Now, then, I'll fix 'em so's we kin draw. To show that I am taking my chances with ther rest of you, I'll draw last."

He walked over to a flat piece of rock, and with his back turned, so the men could not see him, he placed the matches in an even row.

Then he placed another piece of flat stone on top of them, allow the ends to project, and turned to his followers.

"Go ahead an' draw," he exclaimed, with a wave of his hand, as though it was a very important thing that was taking place. Cole stepped up and drew one of the full-sized matches.

"Hooray!" he cried. "I'm goin' to be one what's goin' to get married!"

The next man walked over and drew one of the short ones.

"Confound it!" he cried in a disgusted manner. "I had my heart set on one of the gals."

The third got a long match, and he gave a yell of delight and shook hands with Cole.

The fourth villain drew a full-sized one, also, and he, too, was delighted at his good luck.

Three of the five long matches were drawn, and there were now only two more left.

The fifth man to draw got a short one, as did the sixth.

The seventh drew a prize, and the eighth got a blank.

Big Frank grinned in a satisfied manner.

There was only one match left, and that was a full-sized one.

"It was a square deal, an' no one kin say it wasn't," he said, as he picked up the remaining match.

"That's right," chimed in Cole.

"What do you know about it?" demanded Asa Wood, who was one of the unlucky ones.

"A whole lot," was the reply. "Don't you think it was a square deal?"

"Oh, I guess it was square enough, but I don't know why you want to have so much to say about it."

"Well, I don't think you kin shut me up."

"I kin try, though."

"Well, go ahead an' try," and Cole pulled off his coat.

At this Big Frank seemed to be pleased.

"I don't want no ill feelin's among my men," he remarked, "but seein's you fellers are a little sore on each other, go ahead an' fight it out with your bare knuckles. Mind you, now! No shooters or knives allowed in this game."

At this both men cooled down a trifle.

But the rest began to jeer them, so Cole said he was ready to fight.

"So am I," spoke up Wood.

"Go ahead an' fight, then!" cried their leader. "This is as good a place as any. After ther fight is over we will all go over to Jim Downie's tent an' have nine drinks apiece. Git right in, now, an' may ther best man win!"

Wood led off by hitting Cole a resounding whack on the side of his head.

Then Cole retaliated by giving his opponent a stiff punch in the nose.

"First blood for John Cole!" cried the man named Hines.

Finding that his nose was really bleeding, Wood became enraged and grappled with his man.

He threw him down easily enough and began to bite his ear.

Big Frank now interfered.

"That will do," he said. "Now, git up an' shake hands."

Both were satisfied to let it drop, so a moment later they were shaking hands and telling each other that they bore no grudge.

The nine had been in the little glen holding their little meeting, and they now separated and made for the tent where the liquor was sold, singly and in twos.

They knew that to avoid suspicion they should not be seen going around together too much.

Big Frank was one of the first to walk into the tent.

Downie had no use for him, but when the villain laid down the money and called for a drink, he was not the man to refuse him.

In a few minutes the whole nine were in the tent, and it really appeared as if they had met there accidentally.

They hung about the place until they saw the party ride out of the camp, and then they thought of how the drawing had turned out.

But one thing that never came into the minds of any of them was that they might not succeed in capturing the girls.

In that case the drawing would not amount to anything.

Big Frank thought it would be an easy thing to get away with Young Wild West and his three partners, and then the rest would be easy enough.

But he did not know the sort of people he was bucking against.

He should have had sense enough to let them alone, but he did not.

The spanking Young Wild West had given him ought to have been enough to convince him that the young fellow was capable of doing more.

Shortly after our friends rode out of the camp the nine men left the tent, one or two at a time.

They met on the trail leading over the mountain and started to hunt up those they were so anxious to kill and capture.

"If they are bound for Weston we won't be able to catch them," remarked John Cole.

"I don't think they are bound there," retorted Big Frank. "They don't look as though they was goin' home."

Just then the villains caught sight of a group of riders ascending the mountain.

They instantly recognized them as being the ones they were looking for.

True, our friends were almost a mile off, but they could be seen and recognized, because there were four males and five females in the party.

The nine villains had come out afoot, and they were now in high glee.

"Come on, boys!" cried Big Frank. "We have got to be mighty careful, an' keep out of their sight. If they should happen to catch sight of us sneakin' up on 'em it might be that they would begin to shoot."

"An' then some of us would likely git hurt," remarked one of the crowd, shrugging his shoulders as he thought of the possible consequences.

In a few minutes our friends were out of sight of the villains, as they rounded a bend and were hidden from view by a high, rocky point.

But this did not deter them from keeping on.

With Big Frank puffing like a porpoise and urging them on, they pressed up the ascent for nearly half an hour.

Then they came to a halt and held a consultation.

"I wonder what has become of them?" observed one of them.

At that moment a silvery peal of laughter came to their ears.

"Ah!" exclaimed Cole. "They are close by."

He crept cautiously ahead as he finished speaking, and as he reached an abrupt angle of rock he came to a pause.

The rest did not move, but waited for him to say something.

The spying villain held up his hand for silence, and then, after an interval of fully sixty seconds, he crawled back to them.

"If I know anything, we've got our game into a trap," he observed. "Jest take a look, Frank, but be careful that they don't see you."

The leader of the gang crept forward and took a good look.

He saw our friends seated and standing about in a very picturesque place that was surrounded on three sides by cliffs, and on the fourth by an abyss.

The only way they could have got there with their horses was by the rather narrow ledge that was right before him.

Big Frank crept back to his companions, much gratified at what he had seen.

"We've got 'em!" he exclaimed.

Then the other men wanted to have a look, so they did so, one at a time.

"I don't know exactly what is the best thing to do," said Big Frank.

"Shoot the men," answered John Cole.

"Yes, I know; but how are we goin' to do it without hittin' ther gals?"

"We kin shoot the ones what are ther furthest from ther women first."

"An' then ther rest will be layin' for a shot at us."

"Well, we won't let 'em git a shot at us. We've got 'em in

a trap, an' they can't never git out of that place, only by ther one way."

"See here, John Cole, you seem to have a good head on you, an' you want to go ahead in this thing; s'pose you sneak up there an' take a shot at Young Wild West? If you down him it won't be so much trouble to down ther rest of 'em."

"All right," was the reply, and then the villain sneaked up and fired a shot, only to miss.

This made the villains more set than ever to accomplish what they had come there for, and they began to study out another way.

At length it occurred to Big Frank to destroy the way for our friends to get out of the trap before they did anything else.

"We might be able to cave in that piece over there," he said, "an' if we kin a part of that ledge would go with it. Then they couldn't git out nohow, an' it would only be a question of a short time before we could pick off the men, an' then lower ourselves down by our lariats an' pay attention to ther wimmin."

It was much easier to do than they had anticipated, for the simple loosening of a small boulder sent a pile of dirt crashing into the chasm, and then Young Wild West and his friends were trapped!

CHAPTER VIII.

THE FIRST GOLDEN BULLET FINDS ITS BILLET.

All unconscious that a vile plot had been formed against them, Young Wild West and his friends were making merry in the new town of Nugget Flats.

Wild and Jim went out and shot a dozen partridges, and when they came in with the birds they turned them over to the girls and told them to try their luck at cooking.

There were five of them to do it, so it goes without saying that they prepared as fine a dinner as could be wished for.

After dinner they all mounted their horses and took a ride around to see the country.

Wild had an idea that Weston could be seen from the mountain nearest them, if they went high enough up, so he suggested that they try it.

Every one was willing, as might be supposed, and as they had brought a little lunch with them, it made no difference what time in the day they got back.

There is some fine scenery in the Black Hills.

In those days there were parts of them that the foot of white men had never trod, and when Wild and his party rode about two miles up the winding, natural path they reached one of those places.

Gigantic rocks and quaintly wrought peaks reared themselves on every hand, and here and there were ravines, many of them so deep that they appeared to be bottomless.

But there was always a way to get around all the obstacles that confronted them, and at the end of an hour they were at the spot they had started to reach.

But when they got there they found that they could not see Weston, after all.

A mountain peak hid it from view.

"Here would be a good place to have some lunch," Arietta suggested.

"That's it!" exclaimed Jack Robedee, who was making rapid headway in his love affair with Martha Goff.

They were now on a broad ledge, and further progress upward was cut off by a perpendicular cliff that ran almost to the peak of the mountain itself.

They had been compelled to use considerable caution to reach that point, too, since they had followed a ledge that was just wide enough for one horse to go at a time.

The space they were in was probably a hundred feet square.

Three sides of it were straight up-and-down walls of rock and the other was a precipice.

The ledge they had followed led from this to the winding trail beyond.

Our friends had come prepared to have a good time of it, as we stated before.

Some dry brushwood was found and a fire started.

Then the odor of boiling coffee soon floated on the breeze.

Some salted venison cooking in frying-pans did not serve to make their appetites any less, either, and with a supply of good biscuits made a pretty fair meal.

Arietta and Anna insisted on doing the cooking, and they were allowed to have their own way about it, though the rest seemed as anxious to do it as they.

There was a rich growth of grass on the flat piece of soil they were resting on and this made excellent fodder for the horses.

A spring trickled down the rocks, too, and that insured them all the good water they wanted to drink.

After dinner Jack Robedee entertained them with some of his yarns of his boyhood days in the East.

Young Wild West was sitting on a log with Et, and as she arose to go toward the spring of water a rifle cracked and a bullet flew dangerously close to his head.

Instantly every one of them were on their feet.

They had not dreamed of such a thing as being shot at.

"Get to cover!" cried Cheyenne Charlie.

There were enough rocks and boulders scattered about for them to do this, and they lost no time about it.

No more shots were fired, though our friends were anxious that there should be, as they wanted to find out just where the enemy was located.

Wild was as cool as a cucumber.

Though the shot had been a surprise to him, he was not worried a particle.

He felt it his duty to find who fired it and then return the compliment.

He had an idea of the direction from which it came and he kept his eye that way.

Pretty soon there was a heavy crash, and then our friends were startled to see a portion of the ledge they had come over on go crashing downward.

Every person in the party instantly realized what this meant.

There was now absolutely no way of their leaving the little spot they had thought to be so charming and picturesque.

The faces of the women folks were as pale as death, and all the men showed signs of uneasiness except Young Wild West.

"This appears to be about the queerest adventure I ever met with," he said. "Some enemies of ours must have followed us here, and that being the fact, it would seem that they have got us where they want us. It is now for us to find a way to get out of the trap they have got us in and teach them a lesson that they will not forget in a hurry."

"That's the way to talk!" exclaimed Jim Dart, brightening up as if by magic.

"I'll guarantee that they won't have to try to forget any lesson if I kin draw bead on 'em," spoke up Cheyenne Charlie.

Before any one could say anything further Jack Robedee's rifle flew to his shoulder.

He fired the instant it got there, and as the report rang out a yell of derisive laughter came to their ears.

Then all hands saw what Jack had shot at.

It was a man's hat on a stick protruding from behind a rock the other side of the broken ledge.

The hat was still there, and it tantalized Wild to see it.

He quickly drew bead on it and fired.

The bullet hit the stick that held it and the hat dropped to the ground about four feet from the boulder.

"Now, then," said the young scout grimly, "I want to see one of them attempt to get that hat."

"It won't be worn by any one ag'in this day," spoke up Charlie. "Of that I am sure."

His wife looked at him with a gleam of pride in her eyes, for she knew he was a good shot.

For the next ten minutes a silence reigned.

Then a voice suddenly called out:

"Say! We've got the deadwood on you fellers over there. Do you want to make terms with us, or do you want us to stay here an' starve you out?"

"Just let us know who you are first, and then we may talk with you," promptly answered Wild.

"Well, I am ther man called Big Frank—ther man you spanked an' made a fool of before a whole crowd. There are nine of us, an' we have sworn that unless you do jest what we want you to we'll surely kill you!"

"Oh! It is you, Big Frank, is it? Just step out and let me see you."

"Not much I won't! I know your game all right. You'd plug me ther very second I showed myself, now, wouldn't yer?"

"Yes, that is just exactly what I would do. And, let me tell you, Big Frank, that just so sure as you are living now, just so sure will I send a bullet through your breast before you are twenty-four hours older! I have a presentiment to that effect, so you want to look out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came the jeering laugh from behind the boulders, and our friends could easily tell that all the villains had joined their leader in giving it.

They remained silent after that, during which time our hero was doing a whole lot of thinking.

Presently he took the silver-mounted revolver from the pocket in his shirt.

"I have just thought of something," he observed.

"There are nine men there who have sworn to kill us, and I have nine golden bullets that were given me by Tim the Terror yesterday. I did not know what to do with the bullets then, but I do now."

"I know just what you mean," exclaimed Charlie; "but I think you're a trifle selfish in the matter. If you're goin' to shoot ther whole nine of 'em, where do me an' Jim an' Jack come in?"

"I didn't say I expected to use up the entire nine golden bullets on the nine scoundrels, but the fact of there being nine of them made me think of the bullets, that's all."

"That's it!" said Jack. "I guess we'll stand a show if it comes to shootin'."

"Well," resumed Young Wild West, as he examined the silver-plated weapon to make sure that it was in perfect order, "we have got a big job ahead of us. If we should be able to drive our enemies away, I can't see a way just yet how we are to get away from this little prison-yard of ours. By that piece of ledge tumbling down we are placed in a very bad shape. I have no doubt but that we will find some way to get out after we have disposed of Big Frank and his gang, though."

He spoke in such a confident way that the rest were greatly encouraged.

Then he sat down and did some more thinking.

In a few minutes Wild arose to his feet.

"I am going to see how close I can get to those fellows without them seeing me," he observed. "You must keep a sharp watch on them, and if any of them so much as show an arm or leg, give it to them! They have sworn to kill us, and

that makes it our duty to put them out of the way as fast as we possibly can. Now, I am going to crawl around to the ledge, so keep a sharp watch, and you may get a shot."

By hugging the cliff and dodging along behind boulders, Wild felt that he could reach the ledge in safety.

Once there he would be out of range of the villains behind the rocks on the outside, since they would be unable to see him on account of a bend.

Jim, Charlie and Jack did not take their eyes off the spot where their enemies were hiding, as their daring young leader started on his perilous undertaking.

But Arietta and the rest could not help watching Wild.

So silent and careful did he move that they were charmed.

"He must have an awful lot of patience to move so slow," whispered Martha. "It is but a short distance, but he will be several minutes in getting to that ledge at that rate."

"Do you really think we will get out of this scrape?" Eloise whispered hopefully.

"I certainly do!" Et exclaimed. "I know just what Wild is. He never fails in an undertaking."

The girl's confidence in her young and handsome lover was certainly great.

Slowly the moments passed.

The young scout was getting nearer and nearer to the ledge, and if the villains had seen him they had evinced no signs of the fact.

It must have been four minutes from the time he left his companions that Wild reached the ledge, though it seemed much longer to them.

He was now out of the sight of the nine villains and he could proceed with less caution.

With the silver-mounted revolver in his hand, Wild crept along the ledge.

As he neared the spot that would bring him in view of the hiding-place of the nine scoundrels he dropped close to the rock.

The next minute a gleam of satisfaction shot from his eyes and the shining revolver was leveled at something.

It was one of the men!

He was the only one of the nine to be seen, and he was doomed.

Crack!

As the whip-like report rang out he threw up his arms and dropped.

One of the golden bullets had found its mark.

There was considerable excitement among the villains when they heard the report and saw one of their number drop.

They could not tell, for the life of them, where the shot had come from.

The echoes from the surrounding rocks baffled them in locating the direction.

"That's number one!" muttered Young Wild West, as he crouched close to the rock and waited.

CHAPTER IX.

BIG FRANK'S GAME DOES NOT WORK.

Cheyenne Charlie and the rest could see Young Wild West perfectly well from their hiding-place.

But they could not see the man he had shot, nor did they really know that he had lessened the number of their foes to eight.

Arietta was confident that he had, though, and a moment later all hands thought the same way, for a volley was fired at them from behind the rocks outside.

The bullets merely flatted against the boulders and face of the cliff, so they were but wasting their ammunition.

Meanwhile Young Wild West was lying low and waiting for another shot.

Pretty soon the chance came.

One of the rascals unthinkingly exposed himself from behind a rock.

Once more the silver-mounted revolver spoke, and the second golden bullet had found the black heart of a villain!

This time Big Frank succeeded in locating the spot where the shot came from.

But instead of making a rush for the ledge, he was taken with a strange fear.

He had lost two of his men in such a short time, and as yet not one of the party they had trapped had been touched.

He started in to think real hard, and in less than two minutes he had hit upon a scheme that he thought was bound to work.

"I'll tell you what we'll do, boys," he said. "Them people can't git out of ther trap we've got 'em in, so we'll sneak back a little ways an' then all of a sudden begin to fire an' yell. We'll make out that we've jest come from Nugget Flats and that we have wiped out Big Frank an' his gang in short order. We can do this providin' they don't catch a glimpse of me, 'cause they know you are from ther Flats, anyhow."

"That is a good scheme, hanged if it ain't!" exclaimed John Cole. "If it works we kin git 'em to let us haul ther gals up with lariats by makin' 'em think that they will come up last. Then when we git ther gals we kin jest let a volley go into 'em, an' that will settle ther business. I'll do ther talkin' to them after ther make-believe fight is over."

"You are jest the one to do it, John," said one of the others. "You've got about as much nerve as ther next man."

After a little further talk it was decided to put their plan into execution right away.

Without making any noise, they sneaked off to the left, so they could not be seen by either Wild or his friends.

Then they suddenly rushed up shouting like a lot of wild men and shooting their revolvers right and left.

But they did not come out so they could be seen by our friends.

"Down with 'em, boys!" cried John Cole at the top of his voice. "Big Frank an' his gang followed Young Wild West up here to kill him, an' now he's gittin' a taste of his own medicine. Don't let one of 'em git away."

It all sounded so real that even Young Wild West was deceived.

He got up and swiftly ran around to where his companions were.

"Help has got here, eh?" said Jim. "Well, Wild, you won't get a chance to use the nine golden bullets on the men, after all."

"I used two of them, anyway, and that is some satisfaction," was the reply.

"Good enough! Ah! the fire is dying out. I guess the new arrivals have attended to our foes. Yes, there they come!"

Four men suddenly appeared on the top of the cliff above them.

One of them was John Cole.

"Hello, Young Wild West!" he called out. "So them fellers had you in a trap, did they? Well, it is lucky that I heard 'em talkin' about follerin' you up ther mountain to kill you. There is only four of us, but we soon cleaned 'em out, an' only had one man wounded a little. Can't you git out of there any way?"

"No," replied Wild, as he carefully sized up the four men and came to the conclusion that they were not just the ones he would have taken to be his friends.

"Well, we'll lower a rope down, then, an' haul you up one at a time."

"That will do," replied Wild. "When we get out we will cut down a couple of trees and make a sort of a bridge to get the horses over the ledge. Can't leave them here, you know."

"That's right. That one you've got I've heard say is a very valuable critter. Here comes ther rope. Now send up ther ladies first; that will be best, I guess."

As the fellow said this there was something in his voice that made our hero suspicious that all was not right.

Could it be possible that they were being deceived?

He concluded to be cautious in the matter, so, much to the surprise of his companions, he said:

"Upon second thought, I guess it would be better for you to undermine that big tree over there. If you do that it will fall right across the ledge and then we can all walk over and get out."

When Cole heard this he turned and said something in a low tone to the men with him, and then our hero felt certain that something was wrong.

A moment later a lariat was lowered from above.

"We guess it will be better to haul you up this way," came from above. "Now, jest send ther gals up first."

"We will do nothing of the kind," said Wild in a low tone to his companions. "This is a job to steal the girls from us, as sure as we are alive. Those men are no friends of ours, and I'll bet a thousand they are the same gang that have got us trapped in here. Et, I'll make out that I am going to send you up with the lariat, and while I am doing that the rest of you move around behind the boulders, so as to be out of reach of their bullets."

Then he looked up at Cole and said:

"All right. We'll send the women folks up first."

Just as Wild said this he caught a fleeting glimpse of the evil face of Big Frank as it was pulled quickly behind the jutting wall of rock that ran up at that point.

Our hero was now thoroughly acquainted with the game the men were trying to work, and he had resolved to take the first trick.

As the end of the lariat came within his reach he caught hold of it and made a move as though he was going to tie it around Arietta's waist.

But instead of doing so he gave a quick pull upon it, and it slipped from the villain's hands and came tumbling down.

The girl knew exactly what to do, for as quick as a flash she sprang behind a rock.

Crack!

For the third time that day the silver-mounted revolver spoke.

Down came John Cole with a bullet of gold in his body.

The rest of the villains on the cliff jumped back out of sight without firing an answering shot.

They had played their game and lost!

And their number was now reduced to six.

"How do you expect to git out?" asked Charlie, looking interested.

"See that jutting piece of rock up there?" and he pointed out the object in question. "That is right where I saw the face of Big Frank a little before I shot the other fellow, and when I saw the face of the cowardly scoundrel I noticed the piece of oak sticking up at the same time. I rather think that one of us will be able to throw a lariat over that."

"I rather think so myself!" exclaimed Jack. "Wild, do you know that I seen that myself, an' I seen Big Frank, too. I was thinkin' we might git a rope over it an' git up there."

"Well, we have got to get rid of those men first. It is likely that they will go their full length before they give it up now. Every time they lose a man they get more bitter against us, I suppose."

"That's right," replied Jim. "We——"

The crack of a rifle interrupted him, and Jack Robedee brushed the side of his head.

The remainder of the villains had gone back to their first position, evidently thinking they would have the best show of watching our friends from that point.

Of course that meant that they would not get another shot very soon.

They were now in such a position that they were shielded from the ledge, as well as the point our friends were hiding in.

Young Wild West knew that the only way to get the best of them was to work some game on them.

But this was a hard thing to do, since they had such a small scope to work in.

"I have got an idea that a rope can be thrown over that jutting piece of rock," he said, "without the one who tries it getting in range. They will have to move around toward the ledge in order to get a shot back there, and I'll be on the ledge to pick them off as fast as they expose themselves."

"I'll put a noose over that rock," said Charlie. "If I don't do it in three trials I'll chew grass for my supper!"

CHAPTER X.

ALL BUT ONE.

"I like to hear you talk that way," said Young Wild West, as Cheyenne Charlie started to coil the lariat that lay near the body of John Cole.

"I'll do it, see if I don't!" and there was nothing but determination in the voice of the scout.

"Very well, then. Just wait till I get around on the ledge. I guess I had better put the other three golden bullets in my shooter first, for something tells me that I might get a chance to use them all."

Out came the leather pouch, and in a very short time the cartridges were placed in the chambers.

Then Wild started to work his way around the same as he had done before.

He moved a little faster this time, for he knew the outlaws could not get a good shot at him without exposing themselves.

Jim and Jack were just waiting to get a shot.

So far Wild had done all the thinning-out, and they did not like it much.

Wild reached the ledge without any difficulty.

The outlaws were laying very low now, evidently satisfied that it would only be a question of time before they would win.

They had moved a trifle to the right, and they were now in a place that was well sheltered.

Suddenly one of the villains, who was keeping a sharper lookout than the rest, saw Cheyenne Charlie step out into view.

He was a pretty good shot, and he very quickly drew a bead on the scout.

A report rang out, and he toppled over with a bullet in his brain!

Young Wild West had seen him just in time!

The fourth one of the nine had gone to his last home, and consternation reigned among the survivors of the gang.

They huddled down behind the rocks to await developments, and our friends, elated at what had taken place so far, kept right on at the good work they were doing.

At the second attempt Charlie threw the noose over the jutting point. He tested it, and then finding it secure, began to climb upward.

He made his way up the rope with wonderful quickness.

Neither of his three friends dared look at him now.

Wild lay flat on the ledge, and Jim and Jack crouched behind the rocks, their rifles leveled and their fingers on triggers, ready to shoot the first man who showed himself.

Anna was anxiously watching every moment of her husband, and when she saw him at length reach the top and draw himself up on solid ground, the sigh of relief that came from her lips let all but Wild know that he was safe.

And the best part of it all was that not one of Big Frank's gang was aware that Cheyenne Charlie had managed to get out.

Once upon the top of the cliff Charlie started to get down and around to where the villains were in hiding.

But just as he started to do so a thought struck him.

It was that a portion of the ledge was entirely hidden from the men.

That being the case, he would have an excellent chance to haul Wild up.

No sooner thought of than he crept back and got the lariat without even his friends below seeing any more than his hand as he removed it from the rock.

He got around to a point above the ledge in short order.

The thing now was to make Wild see the rope when he lowered it down behind him.

Down it came just behind the turn and within ten feet of the boy.

But he was watching for a sign of the men in hiding, and he did not see it.

Charlie began swinging it back and forth.

He managed to make the end of it hit Wild on the foot.

Then he turned and saw it.

He understood at once and promptly began crawling backward.

The next minute the villains could not have seen him if they had ventured to peer around the rocks.

Our hero quickly hitched the rope beneath his arms.

He knew who was above, though he could not see him.

A jerk on the rope told Charlie that he was ready, and then up he went.

As soon as he could reach the top of the cliff he helped draw himself over.

He put out his hand, and Charlie shook it in silence.

Then they moved in the direction of the spot where the men who were so anxious to kill them were.

"We will take them alive, if possible," Wild whispered. "If it comes to a fight, let me empty my revolver first. I want to get rid of the golden bullets, you know."

They lost no time in getting around to the near vicinity of the men.

Wild could gauge the distance pretty well, and soon they reached a point where they could see the five remaining scoundrels.

They were grouped together behind a pile of rocks, and one of them was craning his neck to try and get a sight of those the other side of the ledge.

Wild led the way down a bank with noiseless tread.

Ten seconds later they were right upon them!

"Hands up, gentlemen!" exclaimed Young Wild West in a bland manner. "The first man that moves will die!"

If ever there was an astonished lot of men it was Big Frank and his four followers.

The big man himself at once gave in, and up went his hands.

But the others must have thought they had a chance for their lives.

One of them made a move to bring his rifle to bear on Wild.

Then the silver-mounted revolver spoke again, and one more golden bullet sped on its errand of death.

Another made a move to engage the two in a hand-to-hand struggle, but he, too, dropped with a chunk of the precious metal lodged in his spine.

He made the sixth of the nine to go under!

Big Frank remained on his knees with his hands above his head, but the other two sprang to their feet and darted away.

One of them fired a shot as he did so, but it was badly aimed and did no damage.

Crack! Crack!

Wild's revolver spoke twice in rapid succession.

And both of the golden bullets found their mark.

Eight of the nine villains had been downed, and there was still one of the bullets of gold left.

The survivor was Big Frank himself, and he seemed to be satisfied to be taken a prisoner.

He submitted to be bound with very bad grace.

"Ther jig is up, Young Wild West," he said humbly. "You have won ther game, but I don't understand how yer got out of ther trap we got yer in."

"It is not necessary that you should," was the reply. "You haven't a great while to live, and you shouldn't worry over such trifles."

"It will be quite a job to bury all these fellows," said Cheyenne Charlie, shrugging his shoulders as he looked at the bodies lying about.

"We will wait till we get the rest of them out of the trap," Wild answered. "The horses have got to come, too, you know."

The two set to work.

The tree which Young Wild West had told John Cole of was close by, and it was a fact that it would just answer the purpose of a bridge.

Wild and Charlie went at it right away, and in less than ten minutes the roots gave way, and the tree fell with a crash exactly where they wanted it to.

And in falling it dislodged at least fifty tons of dirt and pieces of rock above the ledge and sent it crashing downward.

Then it was that Wild and Charlie gave a simultaneous cry of joy.

Another ledge had been formed which was even wider than the first had been.

It was now safe for both man and beast to cross it.

Thinking that Big Frank was perfectly safe where he was till they came back, the two hastened across and ran to meet their friends.

The moment Jim and the rest saw them coming they started to meet them.

"They are all dead but one!" cried Wild. "And there is a way to get out now. Fetch along the horses."

"How about the body here?" asked Jack.

"We will toss it over the cliff, as we will the rest of them," was the reply. "Then we will loosen some more dirt and send it down upon them to bury them. That is the only way we can do it, since we have no shovels here."

Jim and Jack dragged the body of John Cole to the edge of the cliff where Wild pointed out, and without the least ceremony it was pushed over.

Then the girls walked across the dangerous spot, followed by Wild and the rest leading the horses.

They forgot about Big Frank for the time being and began tossing the carcasses of the villains over the cliff.

The rather gruesome task was soon done, and then Charlie started a rock loose, and a small avalanche of dirt went down on top of them.

But where was the survivor, Big Frank?

As Young Wild West looked for him in the place they had left him he found that he was not there!

An investigation showed the cords that had bound him lying there on the ground.

Near by was a sharp rock sticking a few inches from the ground.

"I see how he got loose," said Wild. "This is the very spot we left him lying upon. He had no trouble to saw the cords

loose. But we must catch him, boys. He is too dangerous a customer to be left running around loose."

They had no idea which direction the villain took, so they started down the winding mountain path in the direction of Nugget Flats.

They had not been on the way five minutes before a revolver began to crack and the bullets flew all around them.

The eagle eye of Young Wild West did not fail him this time, for he caught sight of Big Frank behind a bush not twenty feet away.

Up went the silver-mounted revolver, and for the ninth time that day its sharp report rang out.

Big Frank uttered a sharp cry and fell back dead!

"The last one!" exclaimed Wild.

Then he dismounted and walked over to the fallen man.

The bullet had passed clean through him and lodged in the bark of the tree.

With the point of his knife Young Wild West picked out the golden bullet and placed it in his pocket.

"I will keep that as a reminder of the nine golden bullets," he said, remounting his horse.

Then they proceeded on to Nugget Flats.

It was pretty close to sunset when the party rode in.

The miners had just quit work for the day and were making for their various camps.

As they passed the mayor's tent a good-looking man with a clean-shaven face stepped out and greeted them.

It was Rugged Pete!

He was attired in a new suit typical of the border.

"Hold on, Young Wild West," he said, with reddening face. "It got to my ears that a young lady in your crowd said I would be a handsome man if my whiskers was shaved off. Is that a fact?"

"Yes," answered Wild. "I did hear such a remark made."

"Which gal was it?"

Wild nodded toward Nellie Elton, who was blushing like a rose. "There she is," he said.

"Well, gal, is it a go? Do I marry you?" and the mayor stepped forward and held out his hands for her to dismount.

Nellie made no reply, but she leaned forward and allowed the mayor to lift her to the ground.

"Hoobray!" he yelled, and then gave her a rousing kiss. "People of Nugget Flats, there's goin' to be a weddin', an' that right away!"

Our friends were a little surprised to see how readily the girl took to the rough but honest man.

Rugged Pete, whose real name was Peter Miller, sent a man to hunt up a preacher at once.

One was found with little difficulty.

In less than half an hour from the time the mayor stepped out to meet the returning party he and Nellie were man and wife.

Young Wild took occasion to tell Tim the Terror how he had disposed of the nine bullets of gold.

Our hero took the bullet he had dug from the tree from his pocket, and holding it up, said:

"There is the last one I used. It passed through the heart of your enemy, Big Frank, and lodged in a tree."

"I wish you would give that back to me," the Terror said.

"Well, I had an idea of keeping it, but I never thought of you. Here it is!" The Terror took the bullet, and the matter was ended.

Next week's issue will contain "YOUNG WILD WEST AND THE TENDERFOOT; OR, A NEW YORKER IN THE WEST."

SEND POSTAL FOR OUR FREE CATALOGUE.

CURRENT NEWS

Philippine cigars are now regularly exported to forty countries, the bulk of the shipments, outside the exports to the United States, going to nearby Oriental lands. The total exports last year were 155,000,000 cigars.

Many a prospective purchaser of a motor car would like to take a peep below the chassis—when he views the car in all its glory in the salesroom. A Chicago dealer has solved the problem by hanging one of the show cars 7 feet above the ground, supported by strong steel cables. The height enables both salesman and "prospect" to walk beneath the car and examine it from below.

"Please accept 25 cents for a peck of apples which I stole from your orchard in Marysville, Ohio, six years ago." This was in a letter containing the coin, which Benjamin F. Carmean, a dry goods merchant of this Marysville, received from a man in Columbus, who formerly resided in Marysville. Mr. Carmean returned the money, together with a fine necktie and a letter thanking the man for his honesty.

Dwight E. Hewitt, an eccentric farmer of Weston, Conn., having a premonition of death, dug his own grave and ordered his tombstone. When interment was attempted it was found that Mr. Hewitt had not counted on the size of the coffin case and the grave was eight inches too short. The only way the casket could be lowered in the grave was endwise. Burial was delayed two hours until grave diggers could be found.

The Radium Institute, of London, in its last annual report states that 746 cases were treated during the past year, of which 19 are reported cured, 50 apparently cured, and 328 improved, while in 136 no results had been noted up to the date of writing. Varying results are recorded in cases of cancer, tumors, and other diseases. Certain cases of skin discoloration and warts have been treated with marked success, while the most intractable cases of spring catarrh have been cured.

South Dakota offers some \$8,000,000 worth of State lands for sale at prices ranging from the minimum of \$10 an acre to as high as \$240 per acre for one favored tract, and from \$100 to \$125 for many tracts. The average prices in most of the counties range from \$40 to \$90. The land will be sold on terms of one-fourth cash at time of purchase; one-fourth in five years; one-fourth in ten years and one-fourth in fifteen years, with 5 per cent. interest on the deferred payments, but with the privilege of payment in full at any time.

Forty-eight students of New York University, with William Lambie of that institution, visited Sing Sing Prison and made a tour of the place with the prison guides, who are a committee of inmates appointed by the

Mutual Welfare League for that purpose. The students were impressed with the good discipline and numerous privileges which the men enjoy, and one collegian remarked: "Sing Sing isn't such a bad place at that." A party of thirty-eight from the Hudson Guild, New York, in charge of John L. Elliott, one of the chief workers in the Ethical Culture Society of New York, which conducts the guild, also visited the prison, and were shown about by the Mutual Welfare League guides.

Commander Vilkitskii, the discoverer of Nicholas II. Land, set out last summer from Vladivostock on his third attempt to make the Northeast Passage from the Pacific to the Atlantic. According to news recently received, he was wintered in Taimyr Bay, to the west of Cape Chelyuskin. Here he has been in wireless communication with Captain Sverdrup, who sailed from European Russia last summer in search of the missing Brussilov and Russanov expeditions, and has also wintered on the coast of the Taimyr peninsula. A note in Nature states that Vilkitskii proposes to send part of his crew to Sverdrup's ship, in order to economize his supplies, with a view to the possibility of not getting through the ice next summer.

B. F. Finn, the original "Huckleberry Finn" of Mark Twain's books, has just celebrated his ninetieth birthday at his ranch on the McKenzie River, near Portland, Ore., and is hale and hearty. He has a vivid recollection of Mark Twain, with whom he worked on a Mississippi steamboat, but says Twain really didn't get much from himself of what he wrote about Huckleberry Finn except the name. "We called Clemens Charley in those days," said Finn. "He and I both worked on the Steamer Shotwell, running out of St. Louis. I was nicknamed 'Huckleberry,' and Clemens seemed to take a fancy to the name. Tom Sawyer was my chum, but I was well grown before Clemens knew me." Finn has lived on the McKenzie River here for forty years past, and seldom emerges from his retreat.

The suffrage edition of the Pharos-Reporter, which was edited by members of the Woman's Franchise League, was delayed a short time, because of an advertisement for a local brewery. The forms were all ready for the press-room when Miss Sagie Velle Fenton, editor-in-chief of the edition and owner and publisher of the Logansport Times, Logansport, Ind., a prohibition weekly, discovered the beer "ad" which was a standing advertisement in the paper. "Hold those forms!" cried Miss Fenton to the foreman. "That ad must come out. It would spoil all the work we have already accomplished." A consultation was held and the "ad" was taken out. The women will clear nearly \$300 on the edition. Those who sold papers on the street were Misses Fenton, Helen Kuppenheimer, Bertha Ferguson, Helena Cady, Marguerite Richardson, Gladys Kerns and Nellie Moloney.

The Fate of Philip Funk

—OR—

LEFT IN THE LAND OF FIRE

By "PAWNEE JACK"

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER XI (continued)

Neither of these overcame Tom, however.

After a hard struggle he reached the ship and, landing on the ledge upon which she had stranded, he made his way cautiously over the slippery seaweed toward the rail, where the dog barked a joyous welcome.

Here Tom paused. To crawl over the deck was about as dangerous as to swim out to the ship, for it was inclined almost at an angle of forty-five degrees.

"Hello, miss!" shouted Tom, his voice almost drowned by the barking of the dog and the furious pounding of the surf. "Do you hear me? Sing out as loud as you can, for I must ask a question or two."

"I hear!" was the faint response. The wind carried Tom's voice toward her, while it blew hers away.

"I want a rope!" yelled Tom. "I want to run a line ashore! Tell me where I can lay my hand on a line long enough to reach!"

The girl had to call back her answer three times before Tom could hear.

"Get down the forward hatch! You will find a coil of new rope between decks!" was what he finally understood her to say.

Then came the tug of war.

The getting up to the hatch was a terrible task, and three times Tom was tumbled back against the rail at the risk of knocking himself senseless or breaking his legs.

At last he managed to reach it and to crawl down the ladder.

There was less trouble between decks, for there were posts to hold on to, and Tom had no difficulty in finding the coil of rope.

It was just what he wanted, and the brave boy had made up his mind just what to do with it.

Having gained a foothold where he could work to advantage, Tom proceeded to carry out the plan which he had been working in his mind all along.

Instead of trying to drag the rope on deck, where he could not handle it, he shook it out where he was and rigged up a sort of boatswain's chair at the further end.

In this he showed more skill than might have been expected, for, although he had never been to sea before, the boy was, as we have mentioned, brought up in a seaport town, and from his earliest childhood he had been around among ships and sailors, learning many things of this sort.

When at last he came up out of the hatchway, Tom

had the right end of the rope with him, and was all ready for business.

"I'm going to throw the line to you, miss!" he shouted. "Do you think you can make it fast to the wheel?"

"I'm sure I can!" came the answer, but throwing the heavy line proved to be something easier said than done.

Tom tried it again and again, but each time it fell short.

"I had better take it down on the ledge and throw it up to her," he thought, and he was just about to slide down the deck when the girl showed him another way.

She called out something to the dog.

The knowing animal understood and came over the deck walking where Tom could not possibly have done.

"That's the talk," exclaimed Tom. He extended the rope to the dog, who caught it between his teeth and dragged the end over to the wheel.

"Hooray!" shouted Tom. "Good for the dog!"

He could see George waving his hat on the bluff, while Jeff seemed to be executing a sort of war-dance at his side.

"Nebber was such a feller as dat ar' Tom ob ourn!" Jeff cried. "Mass' George, did yo' ebber see de beat ob it? Why, he done gone and make de very dog work fo' him, dat's what he does."

"Tom's all right," said George; "no discounting that boy. He'll rescue the girl before he gets through with it, you'll see."

"You didn't think so, first off, Mass' George."

"No, I didn't; I've changed my mind, though. See, he's coming down now, and he has the rope wound around him. Oh, he'll make a go of it, I'm sure he will!"

They watched Tom breathlessly as he slid down the deck.

The next moment he was on the ledges, the next and he was in the water again. It was thrilling to watch the boy strike out into the surf, which was now boiling like a pot among the ledges, for the tide was almost dead low.

Of course the risk of being dashed to pieces was now very great, but Tom came safely through all these dangers, and in due time landed under the bluff, came up and joined George and Jeff.

"Tom, you're a wonder!" cried George. "Bully for you, boy! Make fast around this big stone. Perhaps you had better let me do it; I'm a little more used to that sort of thing than you."

So Tom turned the rope over to George, and the girl having made fast to the wheel, they soon had a strong slack line from the wreck to the top of the bluff.

Tom was shivering all over. His face had fairly turned blue with the cold.

"This won't do," cried George, looking at him. "Hustle about, Jeff. See if you can't get some bits of dry driftwood under the rocks down on the beach. We must make a fire if we can and give this boy a chance to dry his clothes."

"No, no! I can stand it," said Tom. "The job isn't done yet. Is the slack line all right, George? Does it work?"

"It does," said George. "You have fixed it fine!"

Tom had indeed made a complete success of it.

The "bo'sen's chair," as the arrangement of rope he had made to run over the main cable is called, seemed to be in perfect working order. The girl had one guy rope to pull it in by and George another to pull it out.

It was useless to try to make the girl hear, so Tom made her understand by signs that all was ready.

All the girl had to do was to seat herself in the chair, the bottom of which was formed of two stout ropes, and let the boys pull her over onto the bluff.

But the girl had her own ideas about this.

Balancing herself against the wheel, she lifted up the great dog and threw him across the ropes of the chair.

The knowing animal seemed to understand what was expected of him, and kept perfectly still in the chair.

"Good for her!" cried George. "She's a brave little dame and no mistake. There isn't one woman in a thousand who wouldn't be on the lookout for herself first!"

"Pull away!" cried Tom; "pull away!"

In less than a minute the dog was on top of the bluff, jumping about the boys and barking like mad.

The girl pulled the chair back again as soon as the dog was safely landed, and got in herself.

"Here she comes! Now then, for the last throw!" cried George.

He and Tom gave a strong pull together and landed the girl safely on the bluff.

CHAPTER XII.

THE DWARFS ATTACK THE WRECK.

Ten minutes later found George, Tom, Jeff and the girl sitting around a good fire of burning driftwood down on the beach, for Jeff had hustled to good purpose, and, finding plenty of wood in the crevices of the rocks, soon started a cheerful blaze.

The girl as yet had said little about herself further than to give her name as Susie Hansen, mentioning that her father was dead and had been captain of the wrecked ship.

"Don't ask me any questions for a few minutes," she said. "Let me get over it all before I talk."

She shuddered and turned her head away from the boys.

It was easy to see that something was preying upon her mind.

Tom wondered what all this could mean.

Miss Hansen had scarcely thanked him for his brave act.

Of course he, as well as the others, was full of curiosity to know what the mystery which seemed to hang over the wreck could be.

The girl seemed to read their thoughts.

"Tom," she said, suddenly turning upon him—the boys had introduced themselves, of course—"I suppose you want to know what all this means and how it happens that you find me alone on the Olsen, steering through the straits?"

"That's what we do, miss," replied Tom.

"Don't be formal with me. I am Susie. I understand only too well where I am. You say you have been left here in the land of fire, the most horrible country in the world. I know all about it. You don't have to tell me of the dangers which are hanging over our heads. I know as well as you do that there isn't one chance in a thousand that we four can ever escape from this place alive."

"That's all true," said George, "but perhaps I see a way out. The tides run heavy here. I look to see the ship float when the tide is at the flood. Perhaps she is not so badly damaged after all."

"It may be so," replied Susie, "but the question is if you would dare to venture on board after hearing what I have to tell. I tried to keep Tom from coming. I called out the warning as loud as I could call it, but the wind blew my words away, and I could not make you hear."

"Out with it," said George; "let's hear the worst at once!"

"When you know the worst," said Susie, looking at him with her great solemn eyes, "you will shun me. I ought to have stayed there and died with the rest of them. That is what I should have done. I ought never to have come ashore."

George drew away with a shudder.

"I see," he replied. "It is fever or something worse."

"It was smallpox, and it carried off every man on board," said Susie in the same solemn way. "I threw the cook into the sea only yesterday. I am the last one left alive out of a crew of twenty men, and my poor father died first of all."

At the first mention of smallpox Jeff gave a howl and, jumping up, ran away.

George sat in silence, as did Tom.

Susie remained staring at the fire, saying at last:

"You can leave me if you wish. I do not care. I have had so much trouble that I am only waiting my turn to die. What makes me sorry is that I may have been the means of causing the death of this brave Tom here, who risked his life to save mine, or of yours, George. I will do anything you say."

"It can't be helped," replied George, gloomily. "I tell you plump and plain, miss, I wish you had never come, but I don't see what good it would do for us to separate now."

"For my part I wouldn't if I could," said Tom. "I'm not afraid. Anyhow I have been on board, so it can make little difference now. When and where was she bound?"

(To be continued)

ITEMS OF INTEREST

DRUG ADDICTION IN THE UNITED STATES.

According to a recent estimate of the U. S. Public Health Service the number of persons in this country who are victims of the drug habit is about 70,000, and the number of doses of narcotic drugs consumed by them annually is about 850,000,000. This estimate is based on figures collected in the State of Tennessee, where under a recently enacted anti-narcotic law, 1,402 permits were issued in six months to persons petitioning for the privilege of using narcotic drugs, and the consumption of such drugs amounted to 8,498,200 average doses.

RARE SURGICAL FEAT.

Henry Zimmerman, twenty-two years old, has undergone an unusual operation, known as ankylosis, at the City Hospital, St. Louis. Tendons and fiber taken from his right thigh were transferred into his left arm. Zimmerman is a window cleaner, and on Dec. 26 he fell from a window, breaking his left arm and elbow. The bone knitted improperly and the entire arm became straight and unbending. The muscles and tendons hardened and the arm appeared as if it was made of stone.

When he was placed upon the operating table under an anæsthetic an opening was made in his right thigh and a bunch of tendons were removed and laid separately upon the table. His stiffened arm was then broken at the elbow and a long incision made. A mass of hardened tendons and muscle was removed and replaced with the pliant tendons from his thigh. The bone was then properly reset. Surgeons in charge of the operation believe it will prove successful and that Zimmerman will have free use of his arm within a few weeks. They say the freedom of movement of Zimmerman's leg will not be impaired.

SWARTHMORE STUDENT SAVES CHILD.

A thrilling story of the rescue of a seven-year-old girl from drowning in the icy waters of Crum Creek, near Swarthmore, by a plucky girl student at Swarthmore College, who braved the dangers of the swift current above the dam near Baltimore Pike to save the little girl's life, became known recently.

Helen Culin, a senior at Swarthmore, is the heroine. The child whose life she saved is Mary Robinson, daughter of Mrs. Nita Robinson, of Swarthmore.

The child was playing along the edge of the creek with her mother seated near by, watching her, when she slipped and fell in the stream. The swift current was carrying the child toward the twenty-foot dam a short distance away when Miss Culin, who was canoeing with a classmate, heard the mother's screams. By this time the child had disappeared.

Pulling off her sweater, Miss Culin leaped into the icy current. Swimming to the spot where she had seen the child, she dived beneath the surface. Unable to find the little girl, she came up an instant for breath, and then

dived again. A few more seconds passed and then she appeared, holding the child.

Miss Culin battled desperately with the current before reaching the shore. Scrambling to safety with the unconscious girl, she sank to the ground exhausted.

WEAKNESS OF ZEPPELINS.

The wrecking of two Zeppelins during the past month serves to emphasize the weaknesses of these huge machines, which in their proper place are by no means to be despised. In steady winds of quite respectable power a Zeppelin can hold its own, but squalls have always been fatal to this type of aircraft, whether in the air or on the ground. It must be remembered that the modern Zeppelin is about five hundred feet long and only forty-five deep at its maximum diameter, so that it takes hundreds of men to hold it on the ground if there is any wind blowing. The framework is composed of the lightest possible aluminum lattice girders held together by aluminum nuts and bolts. After anything like a rough handling it is necessary to spend days, and even weeks, in overhauling this girder work, straightening out buckled ties and webs, and replacing bolts that have broken or sheared off owing to the twisting and bending strains set up by the 'working' of the ship as she plunges, for, owing to her tremendous length, the leverages set up between one end, which is struck by a gust in one direction, and the other end, which is perhaps being pushed in another altogether, are tremendous.

Also it must be remembered that when a Zeppelin, or any other airship for that matter, goes aloft its lifting capacity is so adjusted that it is very little lighter than the air it displaces. Consequently if it runs suddenly into a storm of rain or snow the large surface of the envelope is quickly loaded with so much water that the machine becomes heavier than air and begins to sink. Then it is necessary to drop some of its load (generally water is carried as ballast) in order to lighten the ship, and at the same time it is forced upwards by its engines, somewhat as an aeroplane is elevated. But if the squall strikes it suddenly the load of water may be deposited on the surface faster than the ballast can be let out, and then, as when the L-I. was wrecked in full view of the German fleet in the North Sea in 1913, the crew has to start throwing overboard everything movable—guns, ammunition, bombs, and even navigating instruments.

To add to the trouble, these snow, hail or rain storms are frequently preceded by what are known as "live squalls." In these the cold air accompanying the storm and the warmer air in the open sky form a kind of enormous "roller" of air, inside which the air currents often reach enormous speeds. If one of these squalls strikes a long and delicate structure like a Zeppelin all is over with it. The best it can hope for is that it may be forced to the ground and smashed on trees, which is better than having its back broken in the air and the internal gas bags burst, so that it falls almost like a stone.

THE ROB ROYS

—OR—

BOLD BOB, THE CAPTAIN OF THE TEAM

By DICK ELLISON

(A SERIAL STORY)

CHAPTER II (continued)

"Yes, but he has what neither you nor I possess, my dear boy," was Wamba's cynical retort, "and that is a handsome face and form: all the boys worship him; all the girls adore him, in spite of the fact that his clothing is never of the latest cut, nor his hat the newest style. You cannot deny but that he is a handsome fellow, and one who wins friends wherever he goes."

"Oh, yes, he's handsome enough as far as looks go," and Henry Selden's sallow face flushed hotly. "I never did set myself up as an Adonis, but at the same time I am not willing to take a back seat for Mr. Robert MacGregor. He's the last man in the world I care for, and I'm going to let him see that he can't run everything this side of Lake Ontario."

"Well, for all that, he seems to run it pretty well," and Wamba laughed wickedly, as he spoke. "But that has nothing to do with the matter. Come, let's go back to the college. It's already past supper-time, and we won't get a single bite if we are too late."

So, arm in arm, the precious pair started back toward San Remo, whose lights were already beginning to twinkle over the lake. They had gone but a short distance, when the sound of girlish voices, chatting merrily, accompanied by the clatter of iron-shod hoofs, met their ears. They halted, listening intently, and then they recognized the voices.

"Papa will be worried, Bab, on account of our being too late," a sweet, silvery, girlish voice said, accompanied by a happy laugh. "I did not dream it was so late, did you?"

"No, Sid, I had no idea it was so late," came from the girl addressed in lower, deeper tones. "Time does fly so swiftly when we are together, and, say, I never had so much fun in all my life, did you? Whoa, there, Prince; what's the matter with you, anyway?"

For the restless pony she was mounted upon had suddenly shied to one side, nearly unseating his fair rider. The reason was, he had caught sight of the two dark figures lurking in the shadows of the hedge.

"Prince is getting to be a regular fool-horse, Sid," the girl's musical voice went on once more. "I am sure I cannot see what ails him, but he does not act one bit as he used to. Go on, you silly, what on earth is the matter with you?"

"Perhaps he sees something to frighten him," the first speaker remarked, her light, silvery voice in direct con-

trast to her companion's deep contralto. "For I am sure he was always a sensible horse before to-night. But really, Bab, we must hurry, for papa will be wondering what has become of us, and he will be so frightened. Mamma, too, will be almost in hysterics. If King begins to act one-half so badly as Prince I shall use my whip on him, a thing I was never before forced to do. Go on, sir, what in the world is the matter with you?"

Both ponies were now plunging and rearing, and their fair riders could not urge them forward. They tried every method, even using their whips, but it was of no use, and then, before they realized it, a deep, muffled voice said, close at hand:

"Why be in such haste, fair maidens, when two gallants are near at hand to aid you? If you will give us a kiss, we will stand aside and allow your noble animals to pass us."

It was Henry Selden who spoke, and he managed to disguise his voice so that no one would ever have recognized it. He, as well as his companion, knew who both the girls were, and they were determined not to let them pass quietly, for they knew they were the sweethearts of Robert MacGregor and Murray Roberts. They had been well aware of the fact for a long time, and their jealousy had known no bounds.

"Let's make them stop and give us a kiss?" Rinold Wamba whispered. "That jade Barbara has snubbed me more than once, and now I will take an oath that I'll get even with her. I hate her, yet at the same time I am fond of her. Come along, and we'll see a bit of fun."

With those words the two bullies sprang forward and seized the ponies by the bridles.

A wild shriek of fright burst from Sidney Worth's lips, but Barbara Voss was firm and stern.

"Let go of those horses' bridles, whoever you are!" she called out sternly. "You cowards—you scoundrels! How dare you do a thing like this? I will give you just one moment's warning, and then, if you do not obey me, I will let you feel this whip about your shoulders!"

A mocking burst of laughter greeted her ears, and with her anger aroused, she raised her whip on high, determined to punish the coward as he deserved. She did not know who he was, for he had cleverly managed to change his voice. But she knew it must be a mortal enemy, else why should he stop her in the middle of the road on that dark night? She felt his strong fingers close about her

wrist in an iron-like grip, and she also realized the fact that he had clutched her pony by the bridle in so strong a grip that she could not break the hold, and then she cried out in terror, since she could not help herself.

"Help!" she shrieked, wildly. "Help! Will not some one come to me in my hour of need?"

Both girls were absolutely helpless, for the bullies had their hands over their mouths, while the others held the rearing, struggling ponies. No matter how they struggled, they could not free themselves.

"Give us a kiss, my beauty, then we will let you go!" the voice of Henry Selden cried, hoarse and excited. "Come, now, my girl, don't be a fool, but kiss a chap and you may go!"

"Let me go, you scoundrel," the girl cried aloud, struggling madly to free herself. "Let me go or I will kill you! As sure as there is a heaven above, I will kill you!"

"How will you kill me, sweetheart?" was the mocking retort. "How will you kill me? With kisses? for I am sure you have no other weapon."

"Help, help, help!" again rang out that cry, and the young villain could not stop her. "Ah, heaven, will no one help me? What shall I do? What shall I do?"

"Yes, there is some one to help you," a stern, ringing voice called out, and the next instant there was a rush of flying feet, and before the pair of astonished bullies realized what had happened, they found themselves trying very hard to get out of the thorny hedge where they had been thrown, their faces torn and bleeding from the thorny briars, their hands badly lacerated, "and if I can get my hands on the scoundrels, I will make it cost them their lives."

But the pair of scoundrels were wise enough to take a "quiet sneak," and not show themselves again that night. How they managed to do it is more than I can tell, but nevertheless they escaped the vengeance of their pursuers.

"Miss Worth, Miss Voss, can it be possible that you are the ones insulted by those scoundrels?" Bold Bob exclaimed, a moment after he had tossed the cowards over the hedge. "It seems well-nigh impossible!"

"And yet it is so," Sidney replied, with a hysterical laugh, "and now will not you and your friend kindly escort us home, for we are too frightened to go alone?"

"With the greatest of pleasure," and the handsome young captain of the Rob Roys gave the fair girl's hand a very tender squeeze, which she didn't resent. "You are safe so long as you are with us!"

CHAPTER III.

A SCHEME TO DEFEAT THE ROB ROYS.

The cowardly bully was never so surprised in all his life as he was when he found himself floundering in the ditch, and he lost no time in scrambling to his feet and taking himself away out of sight.

"I hardly think that overgrown rascal will trouble you again, Miss Sidney," our hero said, lifting his hat politely,

a smile of satisfaction hovering about his firm mouth. "For the lesson he has been taught to-night will serve him for many a day."

"I thank you, Mr. MacGregor, more than I can tell," the beautiful girl answered, her fair face flushing. "You were just in time. How dared that scoundrel address me in those terms?" she added, with flashing eyes. "If I told my father of his conduct of to-night he would shoot him."

"Well, Miss Sidney, if you have very much knowledge of human nature, you may rest assured that from now on he will never try it again," and Robert came closer to her pony as he spoke. "If you will allow me I will escort you home, if you have no particular objection."

The look she gave him was sufficient to let him know that she had no objection, and as he walked along beside her they talked of the ball game so near at hand.

"I hope the Rob Roys will be honored by your fair presence, Miss Sidney, and also Miss Barbara," the young captain of the popular team remarked, "and I must confess that I also hope to see you wearing our colors. I should feel very much disappointed were I to see you in the black and yellow of our rivals."

"You need have no fear of that, Mr. MacGregor," the pretty girl replied, "for I side with the Rob Roys every time, and so does Bab. I shall most assuredly wear the plain ribbon of the MacGregors."

"Thank you, Miss Sidney, I appreciate it more than I can tell," and he stroked the pony's neck caressingly. "Ah, here we are at last. I hope you are no longer nervous, and now shall I not escort you home, Miss Barbara?"

"I am going to remain with Sidney all night, Mr. MacGregor, so there will be no need of that, yet you are very kind," Barbara answered. "And if the Rob Roys fail to win I shall be the most disappointed person upon earth."

"Have no fear for the Rob Roys, Miss Barbara," and he laughed softly. "They have never yet been conquered, and I do not intend that they ever will. We are too well known to have any such idea. I shall expect you to throw us a big bouquet of flowers when we come out victors at the end of the battle."

"A big bunch of thistles, you mean," she retorted. "Yes, you will get them, never fear."

"Thank you, Miss Barbara, and good-night," bowing low and raising his cap. "You may have your bunch of thistles on hand, for the Rob Roys are sure to win. Never doubt them for a single instant. Again I will say good-night to both you and Miss Sidney."

The next instant he had disappeared in the shadows of the November night, and the two girls were alone.

"I say, Sid, but he's a regular daisy," Barbara remarked, as she dismounted from her pony, and ran lightly toward the house. "I wish there were more in the world like him. Why, upon my word and honor, he's almost as handsome as Murray is. Of course it would be quite impossible for him to be really as handsome, you know, Sid."

"You wretch," Sidney laughed, running after her friend, "how dare you slander the dauntless Rob Roy? Why, he is as bold and fearless as his famous ancestor, and I am sure he proves it on every occasion."

(To be continued)

TIMELY TOPICS

Prof. Virgil Wiley, a teacher in the Franklin High School, Columbus, Ind., found one of his Barred Rock hens, which he believed had been stolen. The hen was under the reservoir of a kitchen range, which had fallen over her and imprisoned her. For thirty days the hen was without food or water, yet she was alive when found.

A story from Sarasota, Fla., says that C. E. Ringling and others went fishing and caught a shark that had to be landed with a mule team. It weighed 1,100 pounds, and after it was landed and weighed and the glory and pride of the big catch properly recorded, the next step was to bury the dead. A number of negroes were employed and the cost was \$7.

Mrs. O. G. Shaw, of Electron, Wash., the only woman hunter of the county who tackles wildcats in their lair, brought her first trophy this season to County Auditor Morris' office and received the bounty of \$5 allowed under the law. Mrs. Shaw brought in a dozen pelts of wildcats last year and was paid bounties on them. One of the cats she killed while driving along a country road in her automobile. The animal stepped out in front of the machine. Throwing on the brakes, Mrs. Shaw brought out her rifle and killed the cat.

Navy officers indulge in some criticism at the expense of the method of conducting the attack by the Allies on the Dardanelles. They suggest that the allied fleets should have been divided into relays of vessels, each of which would keep under such a constant fire some one of the Turkish forts so that its garrison would have no rest day or night, and would have no opportunity to repair the damage done during the bombardment. A shell dropped into one of the forts at intervals of, say, half an hour would accomplish this result without such an expenditure of ammunition as the Allies have indulged in in their present method of attack.

Electric Confectionery Shops are to be found in St. Paul and Minneapolis. The owner of these shops is a great believer in electricity and he has equipped his tables with candle lamps and desk telephone sets. A customer seats himself at the table, looks at a handy table directory or menu, finds the number of the particular dainty he desires and gives his order by telephone. A minute later the order is placed on his table by a waiter. The system saves a great deal of time because the waiters do not have to make a trip to the table to find out what the customer wants, nor do they have to wait while the customer is deliberating over his choice.

After a series of experiments the New York Municipal Railway Corporation has decided upon a new system of illumination for its subway cars. The head lining and

walls down to the window sills will be enameled white, so as to provide excellent reflecting surfaces. Bowl-frosted tungsten lights will be used, arranged in a single row along the center line of the ceiling. The cars are 9 feet wide inside and 65 feet long, and there will be fifteen of these 56-watt tungsten lamps supported in 6-inch opal reflectors. The effect of this illumination is to give a soft and uniformly distributed light. The eyes of the passengers will not be exposed to the glare of the glowing filaments. The power consumption of this illumination will amount to under 1.5 watts per square foot.

Gathering the spear-like leaves of the wild bear grass that grows profusely over a large area of western Texas and baling the fiber that is obtained therefrom is a new industry for this part of the country. A large plant for preparing the fiber for market has been established here. The product is shipped to Chicago, where it is manufactured into rope, cordage, matting and other products. The available supply of the raw material is said to be practically inexhaustible. Up to the time it was discovered that the leaves contain a valuable fiber bear-grass was considered worthless by the ranchmen. It is now proving a source of considerable revenue for the land owners and the men who are employed in marketing it.

Bridge Patrolman McHugh was standing in his kiosk at the Manhattan end of the Queensboro Bridge, New York, the other night when he saw an automobile slowly coasting down the roadway toward him. The car wobbled a little and he saw that it did not slow up as it approached a wagon traveling ahead of it. The car hit the tail end of the wagon and stopped. McHugh found the driver unconscious, sunk far back in the seat, both hands clutching the wheel. Dr. Buckmeister took him to Flower Hospital, where he died soon. In his cap were the initials "C. L. P." and in his pocket an automobile owner's identification card on which was the name of Charles Leon Penny, Flanders, L. I.

Ignoring all blandishments, a Skye terrier guarded an empty basket for 24 hours at Taylor and Adams streets, Kirkwood, Mo., until finally a boy made friends with the dog and coaxed it to his home, to which he also took the basket. Persons living in the neighborhood first observed the dog at its vigil the previous afternoon. It refused to let anybody touch the basket and could not be lured away by tempting offers of food. Mrs. J. J. Wilkins carried food and water to the dog and gave it a sack to lie upon. King Ambler, 14-year-old son of Arthur Ambler, made overtures to the terrier for a long time before he won its confidence sufficiently for it to permit him to take the basket. Who owns the dog and the basket would not be ascertained, and young Ambler said he hoped the owner would not turn up.

Wild West Weekly

NEW YORK, APRIL 30, 1915.

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GOOD CURRENT NEWS ARTICLES

Lieutenant Gregor Piotrowski, attached to the Aero Corps of the Imperial Russian navy, will arrive at San Diego, Cal., from Petrograd shortly to inspect the military aerodrome and equipment at North Island. The Russian officer came to this country to purchase a number of flying boats and hydro-aeroplanes, which are reported to be far superior for reconnaissance work than any type yet manufactured in Europe.

Experiments made in the German army show that the average soldier can recognize an intimate friend at five hundred feet, an acquaintance at three hundred feet, a person whom the soldier had seen only once before at eighty feet. An expert rifleman can distinguish the parts of a man's body and any decided movement at three hundred feet. A man seems but a spot on the landscape at eighteen hundred feet, and, as a rule, he cannot be seen if he keeps still or if his dress does not contrast with the background.

Linda, a parrot that was supposed to be more than 125 years old and came into the possession of the late Gen. O. Ferry in 1848, during the Mexican War, died of voluntary starvation because of grief over the death of her two mistresses in South Norwalk, Conn. Mrs. Ferry died on March 13 and Miss Ferry died on March 18. From the time of Miss Ferry's death the parrot refused to eat, dying after fifteen days. Linda could sing entire hymns, both in English and Spanish. She never knew what a cage was and occupied a place of honor upon all occasions. Her table manners were beyond criticism.

Willie Hoppe, the world's greatest billiard player, says it is just as necessary for a billiard player to keep in condition as it is for a boxer to be in shape for a hard bout. Hoppe claims that if one's physical condition is good one's nerves are bound to be steady. It is clean living that makes the star more certainly here than in any other branch of sport, he says, and in this respect Hoppe holds to a rigid discipline. Every day he takes a long walk, and this, in connection with the fact that never in his life has he touched any kind of intoxicating drink and never smoked, keeps him in the best of condition at all times.

The motion picture has invaded the realm of medical school instruction. The specialists in diagnosis have discovered that there is no other way in which they can so vividly present to medical students the difference in diagnosis between similar physical appearances as by means of the moving picture. Dr. J. Ivan Dufur, professor of nervous diseases at the Philadelphia College of Osteopathy, is the originator of this method of teaching which, it is believed, will revolutionize medical instruction. Dr. Dufur has, as the result of a year's labor, succeeded in preparing a set of reels, including demonstrations of actual cases of every one of the principal nervous diseases. Harrowing experiences were necessary in the preparation of some of these reels. Dr. Dufur and the photographer were locked for four hours at one time in a room with a dozen insane epileptics waiting for a characteristic fit. The osteopathic practitioners are greatly interested in this method of diagnosis and these reels are being exhibited at State conventions of that school of practice and are being used in their colleges.

GRINS AND CHUCKLES

Guest—What a splendid dinner. It isn't often I get as good a meal as this. Little Willie (son of the host)—We don't, either.

"It's simply impossible for me to find bread for my family," said the loafer. "Same here," rejoined the hustler. "I have to work for it."

Mr. Gayman (laying the paper aside)—Well, there's no fool like an old fool. Mrs. Gayman—What particular folly are you meditating now?

"It took you an awfully long time to pull that fellow's tooth," said the assistant. "Yes," answered the dentist, grimly. "He married the girl I loved."

"I don't like to say such long prayers," said a little girl the other night. "I want to say nice, short ones like nurse says." "What kind does nurse say?" inquired her mother. "Oh, she just says, 'Oh, Lord, why do I have to get up?'"

Mamma—When that bad boy threw stones at you, why didn't you come and tell me instead of throwing stones at him? Tommy (aged six)—Pshaw! That wouldn't have helped any. You couldn't hit the side of a barn.

"What do you mean by accepting a callow youth like Jack, who's just out of college? Why, he'll never make a noise in the world!" "Oh," said Mabel, "you just ought to hear him give his cute college yell and you wouldn't think so."

"Darling," cried the Product of the Effete East, "I love your wild, free life. You are the star of my existence; you——" "Sav," said Texas Tessie, as she carelessly covered him. "I don't like your looks. So kindly canter, or you'll see a shooting star."

A TERRIBLE LEAP.

By Kit Clyde

I went up from New Orleans to collect some heavy demands which our house had against a few of the Arkansas planters.

It was early in March when I started, and I took this season for two reasons.

First, we were anxious for settlements, as it had been whispered that one of our creditors at least was about to sell out and move to California; and secondly, I wished, if possible, to avoid the spring freshets, which would be sure to come in a few weeks at the furthest.

At Napoleon I had the good fortune to find one of our creditors, with whom I made an easy settlement.

I then went up the Arkansas River to Belleville, where I found another. From here I was obliged to go across the country towards Manchester.

My intention had been to follow the river up as far as Little Rock, and then strike down from there upon the Archadelphia-Washington highway; but the meeting with the man at Napoleon had rendered it unnecessary for me to go to Little Rock; so I decided to take the shorter route, trusting that I should make my way without much trouble.

I purchased a good stout horse, and set out from Belleville, taking nearly a western course.

On the second day the weather was very warm, and toward the middle of the afternoon it began to rain; it did not rain hard, however, and I kept on, reaching a hamlet of some half dozen dwelling-houses before dark, where I found accommodation for the night.

Between that time and morning it rained considerable, and I could hear the heavy drops patter upon the thatching above me. The sun did not rise clear, but as the day broke it had ceased raining, and I determined to set forth on my journey.

At noon I reached a hut, where a rough specimen of humanity, named Binks, kept a store, a post-office, and a tavern.

I saw no other dwelling, but supposed there must be some not far off. Here I got dinner, and had my horse fed.

As I called for my horse, after dinner, Binks asked me how far I was going.

I asked if he knew how far it was to Colonel Mortier's.

"Yes," he replied. "Mortier lives just beyond Big Indian Creek. You ain't going there, are you?"

I told him I was.

"It ain't safe, stranger," he added. "The colonel's place is a good twenty miles away, right over the lowest of bottom land."

"But why isn't it safe?"

"Why?" he repeated, seeming to wonder at my question. "I'll tell you why, stranger. It's been raining, and it's been warm, and I'm rather of the mind that the snow's been melting and running on the mountains and bluffs. You see we don't catch it here right off, but when it does come it comes with a rush. If you don't find water enough

before you get to Colonel Mortier's, then my name ain't Tom Binks, that's all."

There was some reason in what the fellow said, but still I did not apprehend the danger which he pictured, and I resolved to keep on.

He told me that I would find but one more house before I came to Mortier's.

I thanked the man for his information, and then set forth.

In an hour I came to the house which had been mentioned, where I found an old woman alone at home, the men having gone off with their guns. I got a drink of water for myself and horse, and pushed on. Half an hour afterwards the rain began to fall in good earnest; and by and by I came to a small stream which, from the appearance of the banks and the color of the water, I knew must be considerably swollen.

However, I forded it without difficulty, and kept on. The land was now lower, and the trees, as Binks had said, grew thick and large. It was a low, dismal forest, and the great raindrops came down with a pattering anything but comfortable or musical. Still the path was plain, and I urged my horse forward.

Ere long the sound of rushing water broke upon my ear, and soon I came to a point where a broad sheet was washing across the road, but I could tell by the trunks of the trees that it was not deep, and I waded my horse through it.

Shortly after this I met two men on horseback, and learned that they belonged at the hut where I had last stopped.

I asked them how far it was to Colonel Mortier's.

"It's only a couple of miles away, but you ain't going there to-night, stranger?" replied one of them.

"Yes," I told him. "If it's only two miles off I'll soon reach it."

"It can't be done, I tell you. The creek's rose, and the logs and trees are sweeping down awful. The biggest horse that was ever made couldn't cross that creek now. We've been there, stranger, and we know. Turn back with us."

But I was not to be turned back so easily, and I told them that I should push on and run the risk.

So on I went, and ere long the sound of rushing water struck my ear.

In a little while I came to the margin of a turbid, swelling stream, which came sweeping down from the gloom of the deep forest. I wondered if my horse could breast the current. It was not wide; not so formidable as I had expected to find it from what I had heard of the creek.

While I was reflecting upon the matter, I cast my eyes up and saw, at no great distance above me, a place where several large trees and logs had become jammed in a narrow part of the channel, forming a complete bridge across the stream.

If I could reach that point I could walk across, and guide my horse by the rein while he swam.

As I moved along towards it I glanced over my left shoulder and saw, in a distance made dim by the driving storm, a high bluff with buildings upon it.

When I reached the jam I at once dismounted, and having slipped the rein from my horse's neck, I grasped it firmly in my hand and stepped upon the logs.

At first the horse refused to follow, but finally he plunged in, and, as he was under the wake of the jam, he swam without much difficulty. The rushing water bore heavily upon the frail bridge, and swayed it to and fro with fearful power, while the white foam dashed over it the whole length.

I had reached the middle, trying every step before I made it, when I thought I felt the fabric giving way beneath me.

Another step, and the surging and creaking of the logs told me that they were going.

On the next moment the part behind me went with a crash. A huge log struck my horse in the breast and swept him away. I could not hold him; I could only look out for myself. With a bounding step I leaped forth, reaching the shore just as the last log of the jam went tearing away.

I looked for my horse, but I could not distinguish him amid the mass that bore him down. The poor beast was gone, and I was left alone to battle my way.

I said, when I escaped from the logs, that I reached the shore. Ah, but it was a treacherous, sunken shore. The water was almost knee-deep among the great trees, and moving down with much force; so that every step had to be taken with the utmost caution; and at times I was forced to catch at the drooping boughs to steady myself against the rush of water.

I heard a loud roar, which seemed to increase in volume as I advanced, but at first I did not pay much attention to it, as I thought that the stream behind me was rising.

At length, however, a terrible truth began to break upon me.

The roar not only increased in volume of tone, but I was assured that it came from the direction in which I was going.

A little while longer, and I saw it all. A large stream was before me. I reached its margin and found it to be a broad, deep, dark river, plunging its mad flood along, bearing trees, and logs, and snags upon its foaming bosom.

How sadly had I been mistaken! This was Big Indian Creek, and the other was only a course which had been made by the freshet. What was I now to do? If I turned back I was surely lost, for the stream which I had once crossed could not be crossed again, even if I had had a horse.

The land all about me was submerged, and I stood in the midst of a wide-rolling sea.

Oh, how I wished I had listened to the men whom I had last met.

But it was too late now.

Death seemed inevitable.

The flood was rising every moment higher and higher.

It was now above my knees anywhere, and I could hardly stand against its impulse.

But I would not die inactive. I would exert myself while life lasted. A natural instinct led me to oppose the current, so I moved against the stream.

By and by I came to a point where a huge tree, close upon the bank of the creek, bent its great branches far over the stream, while upon the opposite side grew another tree, the meeting branches of both forming an arch, below which rolled the dark waters. When I saw this, I saw my only hope. I reached the tree upon my side, and finally succeeded in climbing it. I went up as high as I thought necessary, and then worked my way out upon one of the longest limbs. I went as far as I could, but the prospect was a dubious one. As the branch bent beneath my weight, I found that the connection of the arch was broken. The branches of the tree upon the opposite bank were not far off, but I could not reach them with my hand. The thought of leaping out over the dreadful tide gave my heart such a throb that for a few moments I was almost powerless.

And yet leap I must, if I would be saved. And, moreover, there was no time to lose, for the gloom was fast gathering upon objects about me, and shutting them from my vision. I was two-thirds of the way up the tree, and, as near as I could judge, some sixty feet above the water. I could make the leap, and I might catch some branch of the opposite tree.

I placed my feet carefully, and made sure of my hold upon one of the boughs above me. Then I waited a moment to get breath and to utter a prayer. Then, with all the energy I could summon to my aid, I made the leap.

I caught at a branch of the other tree, and I grasped it with the energy of a dying man, and my hold was good.

But my weight bent it down, down, down, until I hung suspended so near to the boiling, hissing flood that one huge log grazed my feet as it went sweeping down.

In the startling agony of the moment I cried aloud to Heaven to save me. With my death-grip upon that limb I grew calm again. It did not break, it only bent. I summoned my strength back to me, and pulled myself up with my hands. Higher, higher, until I could use my feet. I gained the body of the tree, and then, when I had again taken breath, I lowered myself to the ground. A few steps brought me to land which the surging waters did not reach, and in a little while longer I had dragged my way up the bluff to the door of the dwelling.

I remember that the servants picked me up, and that Colonel Mortier came and called me by name. In the morning I had so far recovered that I was able to arise and dress, and when I told to my host the story of my adventure, he could hardly credit it. When I looked in the mirror I saw the reflection of a pale, haggard face, looking a score of years older than the face with which I had set out from Belleville.

When I gazed out upon the way by which I had come the night before, I saw a wildly rushing stream, tearing up great trees in its mad frenzy, while beyond lay a forest seeming to grow up from the bosom of a great sea.

The water covered the bottom lands as with a deluge, and the work of destruction was fairly commenced.

I saw it all, and, as I shuddered again at the sight, I firmly resolved that I would never undertake another journey across the bottom lands of Arkansas, anywhere near the season of the spring freshets.

NEWS OF THE DAY

Fearing the game laws would result in his arrest if he shot a big black bear which insisted on hanging around his barnyard, Amos Paul, a Cambria township (Pa.) farmer, confined his objections to shooing the bear away, according to the story he told Lester Larimer, county treasurer. Paul came to the treasurer's office to learn what he could do to the bear if it insisted on hanging around. "My folks are getting scared of that bear," Paul told Larimer, "and I'm getting tired of chasing it away. I don't know but it'll turn on me some of these days and chaw me up. What am I going to do?"

Albert Victor Sworr, a private in the medical corps of the British army, has received both the Cross of the Legion of Honor and the Medal Militaire for his heroic deeds. The first decoration came to him after he rescued a French captain who lay wounded with shrapnel bursting all about him. Albert went through a storm of shot and brought the captain back to safety. In the battle of the Aisne a British gun had been put out of action by superior German artillery and five wounded men lay about it. With the Germans still firing on the position, Albert carried the men to safety.

It has been decided to order the Great Lakes Naval Militia vessels out for the annual cruise on August 2, and the exercises will extend until August 15. The fleet will rendezvous at Erie. The program has not been worked out, but in all probability shore leave will be granted at Buffalo, so as to give the officers and men an opportunity to view the Niagara Falls. After rendezvousing at Erie the fleet will work back through Lake Erie and the Detroit River, probably as far as the head of the lakes. Target practice will be one of the main features of this year's instruction. The time of the cruise has been extended so as to give the Naval Militiamen time to hold their annual target practice.

Reduction of postal rates from the United States to South and Central American nations was discussed by President Wilson with his Cabinet recently. The Post Office Department has made offers to reduce the rate to two cents. Some of these countries have replied they cannot afford to make this arrangement at present. Every effort will be made to induce the nations of South and Central America to agree to the reduced rates to facilitate commercial intercourse. Two cents, instead of five cents was the postage rate on letters beginning April 1 between the United States and the British colonies of Barbados and the Leeward Islands in the British West Indies, the Post Office Department announced March 30.

We now have in this country an opportunity to secure an official standard of that commodity sometimes compared to money in the often repeated "time is money."

The Bureau of Standards, the Official Measurer of the United States, undertakes for a fixed fee ranging from fifty cents to five dollars to report on and certify as to pocket watches. The most elaborate test, known as Class A, involves the running of the watch for fifty-four days in a series of periods in various positions and at different temperatures. The subject is treated at length in the Bureau of Standards Circular No. 51, which includes treatises on the handling of a watch, its winding and the manner in which it is carried, and will be found of much interest to those who appreciate a timepiece accurate to the highest degree.

Henry Perthus, sixteen, son of August Perthus, of No. 235 West Thirty-seventh street, New York, who stole, it is charged, \$650 of his father's money ten days ago, has been picked up by the Newark, N. J., police with only \$27 of the bankroll left, they say. The boy bought a cycle car for \$125, sold it the next day for \$50, and then bought an auto for \$250, and subsequently traded it for another. He also bought two bicycles and disappeared. Then his father inspected a hiding-place in his home where he kept his money and discovered his loss. The other day the Newark police learned that a boy who had arrived at the Velodrome, wanting to be a bicycle rider, was spending considerable money. They questioned him. He broke down, they say, and told how he had robbed his father to become a bicycle rider. His father was notified through the New York police. He went to Newark and brought the lad back home.

Out-of-town gunners who take part in the tenth annual amateur championship of America at clay birds on April 30 and on May 1 will be struck with the wonderful improvement that the New York Athletic Club has made in its shooting grounds at Travers Island. During the winter more than \$50,000 has been spent in improvements, and the grounds now are undoubtedly the best in the country. The old shooting house by the waters of Pelham Bay has been enlarged and now is used by the nimrods in preference to the big clubhouse on the island. It has been handsomely furnished in a manner that appeals to the eye of gunners. Heads of deer, moose and other large game are upon the walls, as also are pictures of hunting and shooting scenes. Handsome skins are thrown over the floor and there is a big open fireplace, in which blazing logs warm the gunners when they come from the firing line. Four sets of traps have been used throughout the winter at Travers Island. As a result the New York Athletic Club has been able to handle an unusually large number of gunners each Saturday. It has been no uncommon thing to have more than fifty nimrods on the firing line. All this has wonderfully helped the sport, and indications point to the shoot at the end of the month being the largest ever held for the important title.

INTERESTING ARTICLES

A NOTABLE TREE.

Recruits are now drilling upon what is declared to be the finest expanse of grass in the heart of London—that in the gardens of Gray's Inn. In these gardens stands a remarkable tree, a catalpa, which was brought from the United States by Sir Walter Raleigh in 1598, and was planted at Gray's Inn by Lord Francis Bacon, then a resident there.

A shoot was later taken from the parent tree, this shoot producing an even finer tree than the Raleigh specimen. From this second tree a shoot was also taken, this shoot being shipped to the United States and planted in Philadelphia, where it is now a flourishing tree. The grandson of the Raleigh tree has thus come back to the home of its fathers.

HARVARD STUDENTS TO GO TO MOUNTAINS.

A party of Harvard students who have been studying geology in Cambridge will transfer their studies to the mountains of Colorado in August. Having had the theory expounded by classroom lecture and textbook, and by such specimens as the geological laboratory affords, they will spend several weeks of the summer in field work. Colorado seemed to offer the best opportunity for such explorations. The class has arranged to meet at Ouray, near the San Juan Mountains. Prof. Wallace W. Atwood will be in charge of the expedition. Three weeks will be spent in a systematic study of the geological aspects of the San Juan region. At the end of this time the young geologists will go on a long trip through the higher mountains of Colorado and will make some first-hand investigations into the structure and layout of the backbone of the continent.

THREE HEROIC BOYS.

Foremost among the deeds of heroism performed on the battlefields of Europe are the achievements of three boys who are fighting with the armies of the Allies, says the American Boy. Gustave Chatain was fifteen years of age, and a private of the Ninety-second Regiment of the line of the French army. The regiment was stationed on the front line near Fontenoy. During a lull in the fighting Gustave pushed ahead, quite alone, and suddenly came upon seven German soldiers merrily feasting in a cottage. Gustave dashed forward, got between the Germans and their weapons, and so took them by surprise that they failed to notice that their young enemy was alone. A few moments later the soldiers of the Ninety-second Regiment were cheering wildly as seven crestfallen German prisoners marched into the French lines followed by a single boy with a leveled rifle ready.

Alexander Cherviatskin is fourteen years of age—Russian, as you may guess. At Warsaw he enlisted in a troop of scouts, and was ordered to reconnoiter close to the German lines. Approaching the German trenches under cover of darkness he was captured. Because of his extreme youth the Germans paid little attention to him, and that

same night he was able to escape. But merely escaping was not enough for this boy. He was so bold as to steal a German flag from where it lay beside the sleeping soldiers, and keeping close beside him slipped through the German lines. When almost back to the Russian lines he got in the line of a Russian searchlight and was noticed by the sentries, who opened fire and wounded the boy in the side. Alexander clung to the standard, however, and staggered to the Russian trenches. St. George's Cross had been awarded to him.

THE "DU PONT HAND TRAP."

The "Du Pont Hand Trap" for throwing clay pigeons or targets, as they are called, for the pleasure and instruction of those desiring to become proficient shooters in the field, and at the trap, is the most practical and the handiest device of this character devised. This hand trap which is manufactured by the famous E. I. du Pont-de Nemours Powder Company, Wilmington, Del., weighs only six and a quarter pounds and can be easily carried in an ordinary suitcase or traveling bag. Special canvas or leather cases are also made to carry the hand trap. The trap is fired with the greatest ease from the body on the right side about the waist, and a woman or young person can fire it just as easily as a man. This simplicity of operation is one of the chief advantages of its effectiveness, and its cost is only \$4.

The du Pont hand trap can be used wherever and whenever a shotgun can be used. It is very popular and in constant use at many trapshooting clubs, or picnics, outings and hunting parties, from motor boats and the decks of yachts and steamships, and furnishes a never-ending source of pleasure and enjoyment to participants and spectators. Nothing yet devised approaches the hand trap for practice for hunting and trapshooting, as an endless variety of flights and angles, as well as "twisters," "skimmers," "inverted" targets, "climbers" and targets "on edge" can be thrown with it. Novice and veteran trapshooters find it just the thing with which to keep in practice, and their scores at the trapshooting club show improvement after using it.

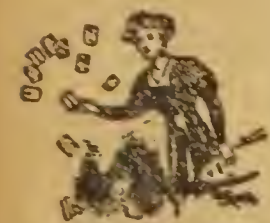
On hunting trips the hand trap will afford the best kind of practice for field shooting, and furnish all kinds of enjoyment for the party when game is scarce. On picnics and outings trapshooting with the hand trap will lend variety to the occasion. Even the women and children will be glad to have an opportunity of joining in the "sport alluring," of which, it is more than likely, they have heard much, but in which they may have had no opportunity of participating. Many motor boats, launches and yachts are equipped with a hand trap or two, which are pressed into service on short notice to help entertain the guests. And it may be stated that shooting from a moving motor boat, on a choppy sea, at clay targets thrown from a hand trap, is one of the fastest games that can be imagined.



MAGIC MIRROR.

Fat and lean funny faces. By looking in these mirrors upright your features become narrow and elongated. Look into it sideways and your phiz broadens out in the most comical manner. Size 3½x2¼ inches, in a handsome imitation morocco case.

Price, 10c. each, postpaid.
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



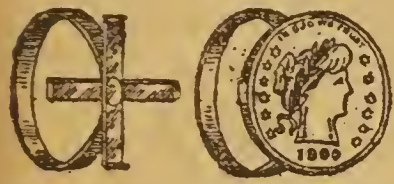
C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.

TRICK CUP.

Made of natural white wood turned, with two compartments; a round, black ball fits on those compartments; the other is a silver ball. By a little trick you make the black ball vanish; a great trick novelty and immense seller.

Price, 10c., postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



TRICK COIN

HOLDER.—The coin holder is attached to a ring made so as to fit anyone's finger. The holder clasps tightly a 25c. piece.

When the ring is placed on the finger with the coin showing on the palm of the hand and offered in change it cannot be picked up. A nice way to tip people.

Price by mail, postpaid, 10c. each.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

POCKET WHISK-BROOM



This is no toy, but a real whisk-broom, 6½ inches high. It is made of imported Japanese bristles, neatly put together, and can easily be carried in the vest pocket, ready for use at any moment, for hats or clothing, etc.

Price 10 cents each, by mail, postpaid.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., N. Y.

PIN MOUSE.



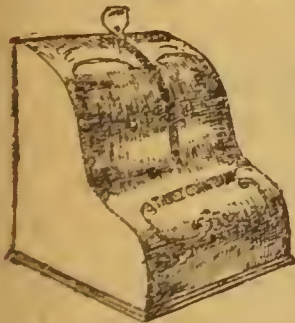
It is made of cast metal and has the exact color, shape and size of a live mouse. Pinned on your or somebody else's clothes, will have a startling effect upon the spectators. The screaming

fun had by this little novelty, especially in the presence of ladies, is more than can be imagined. If a cat happens to be there, there's no other fun to be compared with it.

Price, 10c. each by mail, postpaid; 3 for 25c.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THREE COIN REGISTER BANK



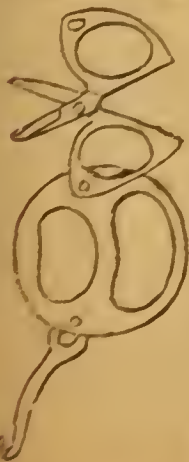
One of latest and best novelties on the market. It adds and registers Nickels, Dimes and Quarters put through the same slot. It holds coins to the amount of Ten Dollars, and then opens itself automatically. One lever action does all the work. Other banks only hold one kind of coin, whereas this one takes three kinds. The three coin bank is handsomely finished, is

guaranteed mechanically perfect, operates with ease and accuracy, and does not get out of order.

Price, by express, \$1.00

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

HANDY TOOL



Every boy should possess one of these handy little instruments. It consists of a buttonhook, a cigar-cutter, scissors, key-ring and bottle-opener, all in one. The steel is absolutely guaranteed. Small catches hold it so that it cannot open in the pocket. Price by mail, postpaid, 15 cents each.

FRANK SMITH

283 Lenox Ave. New York City

THE PHANTOM FINGER.



As these fingers are cast in moulds in which a person's fingers have been encased, they are a lifelike model of the same. The finger can be made to pass through a person's hat or coat without injury to the hat or garment. It appears to be your own finger. A perfect illusion. Price, 15c.; 2 for 25c., postpaid.

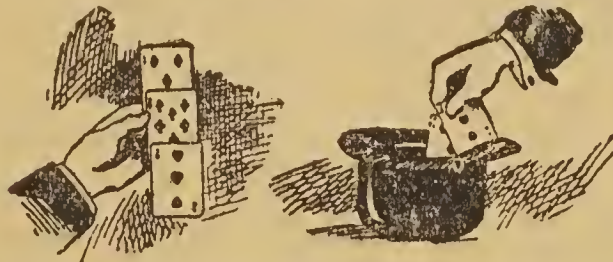
WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.



HUMANATONE.

The improved Humanatone. This flute will be found to be the most enjoyable article ever offered; nickel plated, finely polished; each put up in a box with full instruction how to use them. Price, 18c., postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.



THE DEVIL'S CARD TRICK.—From three cards held in the hand anyone is asked to mentally select one. All three cards are placed in a hat and the performer removes first the two that the audience did not select and passing the hat to them their card has mysteriously vanished. A great climax; highly recommended. Price, 10c.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.

THE CANADIAN WONDER CARD TRICK.

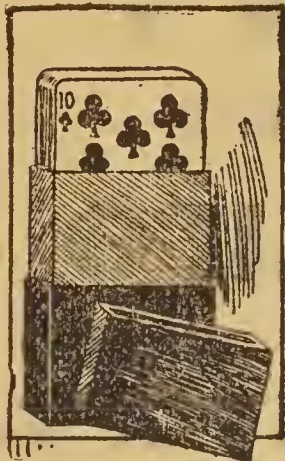


Astonishing, wonderful, and perplexing! Have you seen them? Any child can work them, and yet, what they do is so amusing that the sharpest people on earth are fooled. We cannot tell you what they do, or others would get next and spoil the

fun. Just get a set and read the directions. The results will startle your friends and utterly mystify them. A genuine good thing if you wish to have no end of amusement.

Price by mail, 10c.

C. BEHR, 150 W. 62d St., New York City.



VANISHING PACK OF

CARDS.—You exhibit a neat black card case, you request from the audience a ring, a watch, bracelet, or other jewelry articles. You propose to fill the case with a pack of cards. After doing so, the pack of cards disappear from the case, and the jewelry novelties appear instead. Price by mail, postpaid, 35c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

MINIATURE COMPASS CHARM.



A beautiful charm, to be worn on the watch chain. It consists of a true and perfect compass, to which is attached, by a pivot, a powerful magnifying glass. When not

in use the magnifying glass fits closely inside the compass and is not seen. The compass is protected by a glass crystal, and is handsomely silver-nickel plated and burnished, presenting a very attractive appearance. Here you have a reliable compass, a powerful magnifying glass, and a handsome charm, all in one. It is a Parsian novelty, entirely new. Price, 25c. by mail, postpaid.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE MAGIC CIGAR CASE.



A beautiful and perfect cigar case, made of imitation alligator and sealskin leather; worth a quarter as a cigar case alone. It can be shown full of cigars and instantly handed to a person,

who, upon opening it, finds only an empty case. The box has a secret spring and a double case, and can be operated only by one in the secret. Full printed instructions sent with each case. Every smoker should have one. Price, 20c.; 2 for 35c. by mail, postpaid; one dozen by express, \$1.50.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.



RIDER AGENTS WANTED

in each town to ride and exhibit sample 1915 "Ranger" Bicycle. Write for special offer.

We Ship on Approval without a cent deposit, allow 30 DAYS FREE TRIAL, actual riding test, and prepay freight on every bicycle.

LOWEST PRICES on bicycles, tires and sundries. Do not buy until you receive our catalogs and learn our unheard of prices and marvelous special offer. Tires, coaster-brake rear wheels, lamps, parts, sundries, half usual prices. MEAD CYCLE CO., Dept. G188CHICAGO, ILL.

GREENBACKS

Pack of \$1,000 Stage Bills, 10c; 3 packs, 25c. Send for a pack and show the boys what a WAD you carry.

C. A. NICHOLS, JR., Box 90, Chili, N. Y.

FREE—Watch, Typewriter or Cash Premium for selling Postcards. Lock Box 246 Elk River, Minn.

WRITE Photoplays, \$50.00 each. Photoplaywriting Encyclopedia Text Book. Ten Lessons for 25c. "500 Movie Plots" Worth \$25.00 for 75c. Souvenir. Filmograph Co., Syracuse, N. Y.

LOTS OF FUN FOR A DIME

Ventriloquist's Double Throat Fits roof of mouth, always invisible, greatest thing yet. Astonish and mystify your friends. Sing like a canary; whine like a puppy; grow like a rooster, and imitate birds and beasts of field and forest. **LOADS OF FUN.** Wonderful invention. Thousands sold. Price only 10 cents. 4 for 25 cents or 12 for 50 cents.

Chas. Unger, R. F. D. No. 1, Dept. 5, Catskill, N. Y.

NOVELTIES—Tricks, jokes, puzzles, magic. Illustrated catalogue free.

EXCELSIOR NOVELTY CO., Dept. C, Anderson Realty Bldg., Mount Vernon, N. Y.

NEW SURPRISE NOVELTY.



Foxy Grandpa, Mr. Peewee and other comical faces artistically colored, to which is attached a long rubber tube, connected with a rubber ball, which can be filled with water, the rubber ball being carried in the pocket, a slight pressure on the bulb causes a long stream, the result can easily be seen.

Price, 15c.,

Postpaid.

H. F. LANG, 1815 Centre St., B'klyn, N. Y.

NORWEGIAN MOUSE.



A very large gray mouse, measuring 8 inches from tip of nose to end of tail. The body of mouse is hollow. Place your first finger in his body, and then by moving your finger up and down, the mouse appears to be running up your sleeve. Enter a room where there are ladies, with the mouse running up your sleeve, and you will see a rapid scattering of the fair sex. Many practical jokes can be perpetrated with this small rodent.

Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. mailed, postpaid.

FRANK SMITH, 383 Lenox Ave., N. Y.



THE MULTIPLYING CORKS.—A small round box is shown to be empty and one of the spectators is allowed to place three corks in it. The cover is put on and the box is handed to one of the spectators, who, upon removing the cover, finds six corks in the box. Three of the corks are now made to vanish as mysteriously as they came. Very deceptive.

Price, 15c.

WOLFF NOVELTY CO., 29 W. 26th St., N. Y.

THE DISAPPEARING CIGAR.



A new and startling trick. You ask a friend if he will have a cigar; if he says yes (which is usually the case), you take from your pocket

or cigar case, an ordinary cigar, and hand it to him. As he reaches out for it, the cigar instantly disappears right before his eyes, much to his astonishment. You can apologize, saying, you are very sorry, but that it was the last cigar you had, and the chances are that he will invite you to smoke with him if you will let him into the secret. It is not done by sleight-of-hand, but the cigar actually disappears so suddenly that it is impossible for the eye to follow it, and where it has gone, no one can tell. A wonderful illusion.

Price, 10c.; 3 for 25c. by mail, postpaid.

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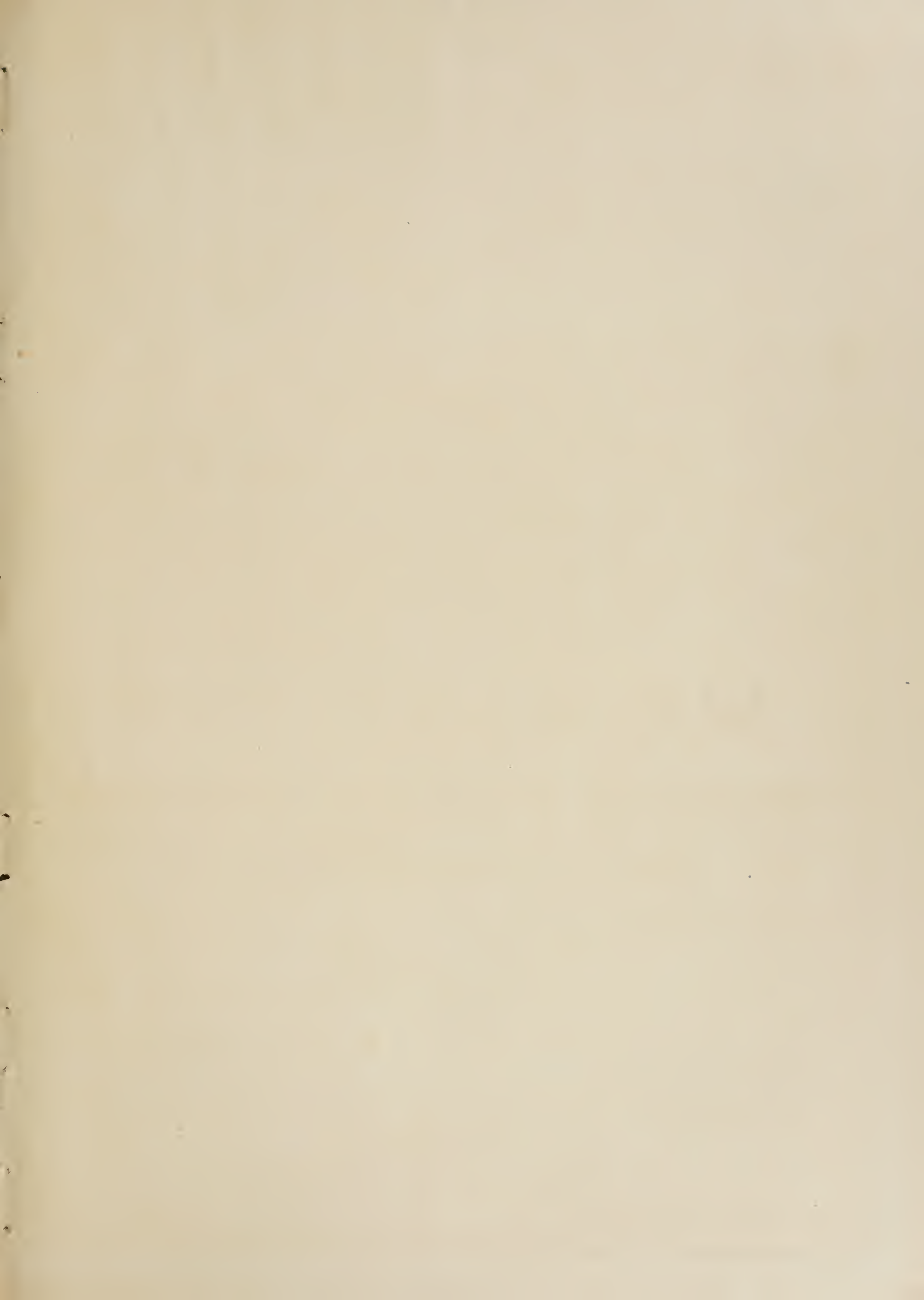
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